THE STORY OF MOSSLEY

Ancient and Modern

Being Accounts from Many Sources
of Old Customs, Old Buildings,
and later development

COMPILED AND ILLUSTRATED
by
ALFRED HOLT

MOSSLEY, 1926

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Compiled and Illustrated
by
Alfred Holt.

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FOREWORD.

My Dear Children,

Many books have a preface or foreword, which contains some explanation with regard to the publication.

I have been a Teacher for many years at St. John's School, and during that time I have known many hundreds of children who had but little idea about their own town and its history.

This book has been compiled and written especially for you,—the children of Mossley; it is intended to give you some idea of how our town has grown, and how our forefathers lived and worked.

To the older people who read this book there is a message also. It is hoped to bring out a later edition, containing local events and stories of men and days that are gone. Your help will be welcome and appreciated.

Your thanks are due to Councillor Alfred E. Bell, the Chairman of the Education Committee, who has paid the expenses of publication and presented to you a copy of this first volume.

I am greatly indebted for material, photographs, etc., to Mrs. J. E. Sherwood, Hartlepool; the late Seth Radcliffe, Esq., Mossley; John Radcliffe, Esq., Mossley; Hartley Bateson, Esq., Springhead; Wright Mosley, Esq., Mossley; F. J. Stubbs, Esq., Oldham; F. Yates, Esq., Lydgate; Ammon Wrigley, Esq., Oldham; Rev. C. H. Bagott, M.A., late of Mossley; P. Hirst, Esq., Mossley; S. Hirst, Esq., Mossley; J. Garrett, Esq., Mossley; J. Moss, Esq., Mossley; C. H. Higson, Esq., Lees; J. Shaw, Esq., Mossley; Mrs. Leighton, Mossley; S. Jackson, Esq., Mossley; Ben Lees, Esq., Mossley; J. E. Nield, Esq., Mossley.

If I have omitted any person, I offer apologies and thanks to them also.

References have been made to Baines' "History of Lancashire," Clay's "Geology," *Railway Journal*, "John O' London," "Schoolmaster," *Ashton Reporter*, Butterworth's "History of Oldham and Ashton," Earwaker's "East Cheshire," Ormerod's "History of Cheshire," etc.

I hope you will all enjoy reading the book.

Yours faithfully,

ALFRED HOLT.

To

My Father and Mother

and the

Children of Mossley

To-day, and the Future.

ROUGHTOWN, FROM BAGULEY.

HOME BEAUTIES.

*

We hear of other countries,
And talk of lands afar,
And wonders formed by Nature—
How beautiful they are.

But let us look around us;
Why seek a foreign land?
The little hills of Mossley—
How pleasantly they stand.

If you are fond of climbing,
Or if a view you like,
Then choose a sunny morning
And visit Hartshead Pike.

I love the silent pathway,
The streamlet running by;
The lark, with song triumphant,
Ascending to the sky.

The grass the hills adorning,
A flower, a leaf, a tree—
Which often are unnoticed,
Are company for me.

Then there is little Luzley,
And Haddens, Lydgate, Scout,
All have their rustic beauties
If you will search them out.

Wherever I may wander,
However far I roam,
I am not discontented—
There is no place like home.

ALICE OGDEN. *May*, 1882.

FLORET·QUI·LABORAT

MOSSLEY.

*

MOSSLEY is situated in the three counties of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire. The river Tame is the boundary between Lancashire and Cheshire ; the boundary between Yorkshire and Lancashire is the brook which runs under Brookbottom and down Brookfields ; this brook is mostly covered over to-day, and many are not even aware of its existence.

The Mossley coat-of-arms shows three square divisions on the top portion of the shield ; the middle division contains a sheaf of corn, and denotes that part of Mossley is in Cheshire ; the two side divisions show the " Red Rose of Lancashire " and the " White Rose of Yorkshire," denoting that Mossley is, in some part, a portion of these counties.

When there is an election this is brought before your notice.

The lower space of the shield is filled with a cotton plant, which represents the chief industry of the town ; the band of wavy lines across indicates the river Tame which runs through the town. The Latin motto *Floret qui laborat* means " Let him flourish who labours."

The Charter of Incorporation was granted the 13th of March, 1885. In the very early days, Mossley was included in the Ashton area, and had no separate existence ; it is only in its later days that the town has had an entity of its own.

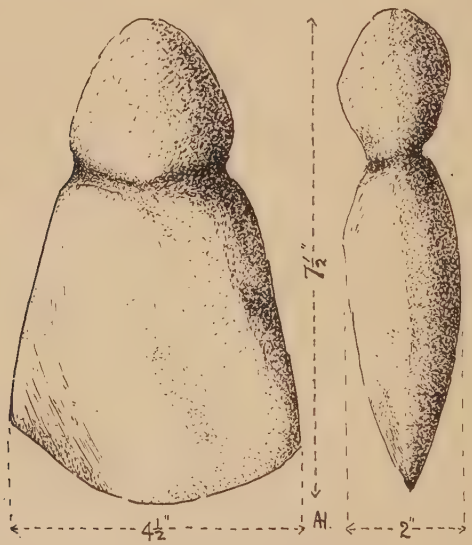
" The origin of the name Mossley appears evident from the Saxon ' meas ' (moss) and ' leas ' (field), a field or pasture overgrown with moss." " Luzley is supposed to get its name from the Danish ' loz ' and Saxon ' ley ' an unfenced field or pasture," or common land.

" Micklehurst is a combination of two words ; ' Mickle,' meaning little, and ' Hurst,' a wood."—(Butterworth).

CHAPTER I.

The Stone Age—Before Time Counted.

If you stand on the high land of Hartshead or Luzley, or on the slope of Bucton, on the Micklehurst side, you notice that the town of Mossley is built on both sides of a wide valley.



Stone Celt or Axe.
(Found by the late Mr. Seth Radcliffe.)

Try to imagine that at one time there was not a house or building of any kind in this valley; there was no canal, there was no railway; there were no roads; but the hillsides on both slopes were covered all over with trees of oak, elm, beech, ash and hazel, making one large forest, with the river flowing along the lower part of the valley.

Rambling through this jungle of brushwood and undergrowth were to be found wild animals, which to-day are not found in this country ; bears, wolves, boars and deer roamed at their will, without fear of man ; in facts it would be the other way about ; the human inhabitant, of that time would go in fear and trembling for their safety, when the presence of these ferocious animals was known.

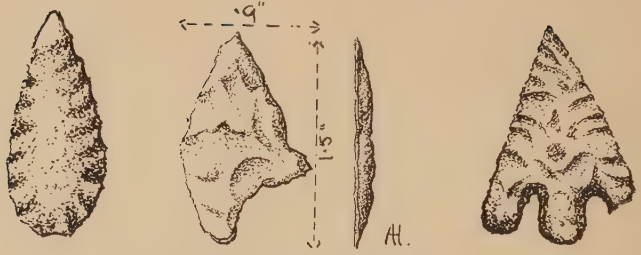
The man of that period, some thousands of years ago, had very few weapons ; one of his larger weapons or tools was a stone axe. Look at the sketch and note the formation ; the original axe was found on the hill-top, in the field known as " Featherbed," on Light Birches, some few years ago by the late Mr. Seth Radcliffe, of the Post Office, Brookbottom.

The smaller weapons of the man would be arrows tipped with flint heads ; several of these flint arrow-heads have been found around the hill-tops of Luzley, Hartshead and Bucton.

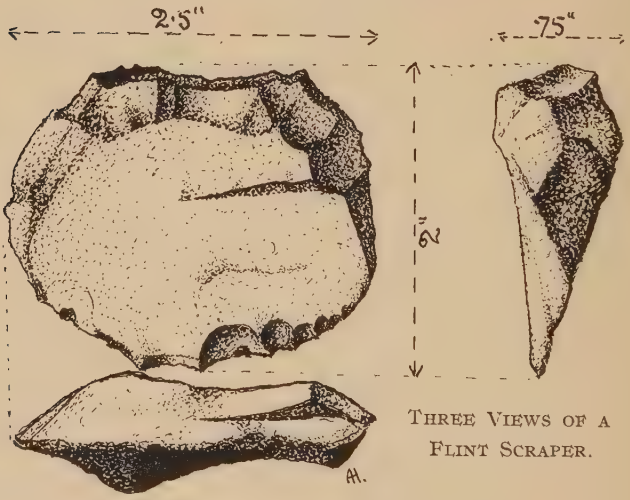
All the home the family possessed would be a cave or corner shelter in the rocks ; the family had a very serious struggle for existence ; the problem was how to live, to get food, to get shelter, to get clothing, to make pots for holding food, and to make weapons. The native had very little idea about time, except the varying seasons ; the winter home would be in the cave, whilst the summer camp would be in the half-cleared space, on the border of the forest, on the hill-top.

We know very little about the man and his family, and can only surmise from the various tools and implements which have been found from time to time as to his mode of life.

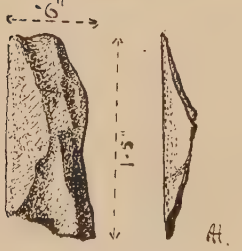
The knowledge of our ancestry is obtained from the remains which are found all over the country, by the process of deduction. Sometimes one of the workshops of these early dwellers is unearthed upon the hill-top ; scattered over the floor are bits of flint, in flakes, which the " arrow-head " maker chipped off as he fashioned the flint into shape as a scraper, as a knife, or as a barbed



THREE TYPES OF FLINT ARROW-HEADS.



THREE VIEWS OF A FLINT SCRAPER.



FLINT KNIFE.

FLINT IMPLEMENTS OF THE STONE AGE

Found by the Late SETH RADCLIFFE, Esq.

arrow-head. Look at the drawings of flint heads and scrapers, which have all been found in this district, on the hills around, and then try to imagine working with tools of this character.

As men have found these flints in the form of arrow-heads, we must argue that these were fastened on the ends of straight sticks, and used in defence or attack, to help in obtaining food, or to help the man in keeping his family safe from the prowling animals that were to be found in the forest around him.

The arrow-heads are of three varieties ; the first kind is of a plain nature, but the second one has one barb, and the third has two barbs ; many specimens can be seen in the various museums in the surrounding towns.

The " scrapers " have a small depression, slightly concave, which enabled the thumb of the worker to maintain a firmer grip when he was using the implement.

The finding of these specimens upon the hills around is good evidence that these men of the Stone Age lived on these hill-tops ; the hill-top was selected as a place of residence so that the approach of enemies could be plainly seen.

As the savage of to-day has a knowledge of how to get fire from the flint by means of sparks, so we can grant to our ancestor the power of making and using fire.

With his stone axe he could, after a manner, break down trees for fuel ; with his flint scraper and knife he could fashion a straight length into an arrow and a curved length of a tree branch into a bow ; with the same tools he would take the sinews of the animals he killed and make them into the strings for his bow ; the skin of the animal he would dry in the sun, and with the scraper take off the hair ; afterwards rubbing with fat, the skin would become pliable and suitable to be made into clothing.

The boy of that period could throw stones, probably with great accuracy ; the food supply was constantly a problem ; when in the forest outskirts, a straight aim would result in an addition to the family larder of a bird or small animal. The boy of to-day is only exercis-

ing an inherent impulse when he picks up a stone and throws at some moving object ; the boy always did throw from the earliest of days ; he had to !

Either the man or the woman made some attempt at providing receptacles for liquids and foods. In many museums can be seen rough examples of clay pottery similar in character to these in the illustration. The originals were found on " Pule Hill," in the Marsden

URNS FOUND ON PULE HILL, MARSDEN.

district, in fragments, and afterwards pieced together ; sometimes only a few fragments have been found, but occasionally whole specimens have been unearthed. The latter are unique and very rare.

These urns, although not found in Mossley, are yet full of interest, because they were found not very far away. "The vessels are composed of clay, and are of a

frail character. They vary in colour from a darkish to a yellowish brown. The ornamentation is the "herring bone," with lines of short punctures made in the clay while it is still damp. The upper one stands on four feet or projections ; its width across the top is about seven inches, and it stands about three-and-a-half inches high. The lower one is five and seven-eighths inches across the top, and six inches across the shoulder, and four-and-a-quarter inches in height. They are classed as " food " vessels by experts."

It was the custom of the wild tribes who inhabited the local hills to cremate the bodies of their chieftains after death, placing the ashes inside an earthenware vase and burying the same in a stone-protected cavity, above which another large stone was placed for further protection. Several of these burial urns have been found in recent years on the Pennine Range, within easy reach of Bucton, and there is every reason to believe that such things exist in our district, but as yet unknown.

From the discovery of rudely-fashioned " querns " or hand-mills we can argue that corn was grown for food, and ground into rough flour by the women. The "quern" shown is in the possession of Mr. John Radcliffe ; it is one that has been in the family for some generations, and was used for the purpose of grinding corn or oats in the early days, and after—in later times—for grinding coffee. The initials are W.R. and S.R., and the little figure at the top was evidently a crest or ownership mark.

The top portion is in the form of a square block, containing a basin-shaped hollow in which the grains of corn were put ; these were then reduced to a powder of varying fineness by pounding with the stone pestle. The base, which has been cut roughly to stand on four feet, is of a circular form.

As flints are not indigenous to this part of the country, the old arrow-maker would have to make journeys to other districts, and return home with the raw flints ; thus there must have been communication with other people, and a " trade " by means of barter ; the pot-

maker and the arrow-head-chipper would exchange their goods for meat and hides provided by the hunter.

If you turn to the time chart at the end of the book you will find the period of which you have been reading. If you wish to read more about this pre-historic man and his works, then books in the public libraries on the

HAND QUERN.

"Stone Age" and "Archæology" will be found interesting.

By no means has this district been exhausted of specimens; when rambling over the moors and hill-tops, especially after heavy rainfalls, stones and flints become unearthed and laid bare, after being buried for thousands of years. It is for you to seek and maybe find some notable specimen of pre-historic days.

CHAPTER II.

Before the Stone Age.

THE man of the Stone Age, spoken of in Chapter I., existed some thousands of years ago ; yet this valley had a history even before that period !

We must go back further still, to a time when this valley of ours was a mass of ice and snow ; it was all occupied by a huge glacier, which began away beyond Greenfield, and continued far below Stalybridge.

When this glacier was grinding its way down the valley by its own weight, rocks became embedded in the ice mass and were carried slowly down. Whenever the edge of the rock came into contact with other rocks, the one which was the harder would scratch the other ; sometimes a deep cut would be the result. If you are up Chew Valley some day, and look carefully at the rock-face on the valley-side you can trace these scratches along the surface of the out-cropping rock. Over all the places where a glacier has passed the rocks are levelled, scratched and scored. These " striations " or scratches show the direction of the movement of the glacier.

Again, in different parts of this valley, can be found huge, rounded boulders ; they are of a different kind of rock from the hills around ; the majority of them have one or more flat surfaces ; sometimes the corners are all rounded ; and some may show deep cuts in their sides.

From whence came these peculiar boulders ?

The answer is they were brought by the glacier many ages ago ; the scars are where the rock, in its passage was faced by another rock of harder nature ; the flat side is the result of the grinding action of one rock against the face of another rock ; they are of a different composition because they have come from an entirely different locality, and were carried here by the ice of the glacier. When the climatic conditions of the land

became altered, and a warmer atmosphere obtained, the ice gradually disappeared, and the stones or boulders were deposited on the hillsides.

"Masses of stone, some of considerable size, are scattered over many parts of its surface, or buried at a small depth beneath it, embedded in clay; and these stones consist of granite, sienite and other primary rocks, though no rocks of a similar kind are to be seen in situation nearer than in North Wales on one side, or Westmorland or Cumberland on the other, and some of the stones appear to belong to rocks still more remote in the mountains of Scotland. These stones are generally more or less rounded by attrition, and have evidently been transported from a great distance to the places where they are now found."—(Baines.)

There is a glacial boulder in St. John's Churchyard; it forms the base of the war memorial cross. The stone mason who cut the hollow for the cross said that it was the hardest stone he had ever worked upon with a mallet and chisel. This stone was found when the schoolboys were making the garden in 1915; it was buried about six feet deep in the soil.

There are other boulders in the garden of the Field Naturalists; and scattered about the hillsides are to be seen boulders of a like nature. In the Mossley Park is another large boulder, which was found in the sand hole near Livingstone School; this sand-bed extends a great distance, and runs by the side of Abney Church across to the Micklehurst side near Longlands mill; this strata of sand is supposed to be the remains of the bed of a huge river, in some former period of time.

In Ashton Park and Oldham Park further relics of this "Ice Age" can be seen, in the specimens of huge boulders.

When we sit down to think of this little valley of ours, we must understand that "Time," as we think about it, is as nothing when we compare it with the "Time" that has been occupied in making this valley of Mossley.

A thousand years is but a short period.

* * * * * * * * *

THE BOULDER IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCHYARD.

This is the story of my life, as much as I can remember.

" I am very, very old. How old I am I do not know ; neither does anyone else. This I do know, that when I settled down in this place, there was no Mossley ; there were no houses of any kind. I am far away from the first place that I lived at ; there are a few more scattered stones like myself on the hillsides around ; we all came from our native place about the same time.

" I am a piece of rock of the granite type.

" The nearest rocks of my kind are a long way from here.

" ' How did you get here ? ' I hear a little voice ask.

" Well, long ago this earth of ours was covered all over in this district with ice and snow. When we speak about this period we call it ' The Ice Age.'

" Try to imagine what the earth must have been like at that time ; everything all covered over with ice and snow ; very few animals were to be seen and only a few shrubs and mosses.

" The animals which lived then were nothing like the animals which live with you at the present time.

" Why, I remember one huge animal bigger than any animal you have ever seen.

" ' Bigger than an elephant ? ' you ask.

" Oh, yes, much larger ; larger than two elephants together ! There are no such animals to-day ; they are extinct.

" I know that such animals lived then, because their bones have been found in caves and in other places, when men have been excavating. These bones have been collected, and clever men have built up the skeleton of some of the animals which lived in this Ice Age. If you are at all interested, some of these extinct monsters' bony structures can be seen in the museums in Manchester and district.

" I was part of a huge rock that had been formed by fire in the days before history can be reckoned.

" Do you know there are only two kinds of rocks in this world ; those formed by water and those formed by

fire? The water rocks are generally in layers, and the fire rocks contain crystals.

" I was in a large valley, which gradually became full of snow ; then more snow came, and more on the top of that ; finally the whole area for miles around was nothing but a wide expanse of snow, very similar in character to the snow-fields that you have seen exhibited at the Picture Palace, when scenes of the Arctic regions have been shown.

" As time went on the snow became compressed, and the layers of snow at the bottom were turned into ice by

FLAT SIDE OF BOULDER SHOWING "STRIATIONS," $3\frac{1}{2}' \times 2\frac{1}{2}'$.

the pressure and weight of the snow above. The weight that was higher up the valley began to push down until all around me was nothing but thick ice, which kept pushing away at my side.

" The weight in the valley kept increasing each year, until at last the force was so great that I could not stand against it, and " crack " went all one side of me, and I was broken off from the parent rock ; and then my journey to this present place began. I only moved very slowly down that valley ; if I moved above one

yard in a year it was quick travelling ; sometimes I did not even cover that small distance.

" Now, if you will think carefully about that last sentence of mine, it will help you to form some idea of how old I am, and how long it has taken me to reach this restingplace.

" As I came down that valley I had all kinds of troubles. In one place one of my corners came against another rock, and do you know, when I left that rock, my corner was no longer there. It had been rubbed quite away. If you will have a good look at me in the churchyard, you will see that I have no corners now. That similar process happened to me time and time again. I did not always suffer ; sometimes I rubbed the corner from some other rock ; it all depended upon one fact, which rock was the harder substance.

" If the rock that I met was the harder, then I had to suffer, and be ground ; on the other hand, when I was the harder rock, then the opponent had to stand the grinding.

" The harder rock always won.

" With this moving about from place to place I was either rubbing the corner from my neighbour, or he was taking something from me. I remember one time meeting a very hard rock on one of the mountain-sides in the far north. A jagged point of that rock cut into my side just like a knife ; this cut is on the under-side at present ; it begins very small, only just a scratch ; but it gradually grows deeper and deeper into my solid body, until at the finish the cut is over one inch and a half deep. For a very long period of time that point of rock was cutting into my side, and that scar is the result.

" If you will notice the front of me you will see that I am fairly flat ; that was another occasion when I came into contact with another huge boulder something like myself, and we rubbed against one another for quite a number of years. When we parted company I had all the face of me ground flat, and the face of my friend was flattened also.

" For a long time after this I had very few troubles.

I was carried along so slowly, and turned about from side to side as the ice moved along ; and with each turn I grew a little less on some one corner.

" I remember landing at the far end of the Greenfield Valley, as it is now called ; it had no name then. The news came to us that some time later, when we got to the lower part of the valley, our journey would be finished ; the climate was growing warmer ; the ice in which we were embedded would be melted gradually, and we should be put down to rest in some place for good.

" You must not think that the journey from the top of the Greenfield moors to my present place was a matter of a few years ; a hundred years on a journey like that is a very short time ; it was a journey that lasted several hundreds of years, as our rate of travel was only about a yard each year, as I have said before.

" If you will look at the contour map of the district you can trace the latter part of the journey.

" The time came when the ice could no longer hold me ; it began to lose its grip upon my sides ; gradually I sank down upon the ground just where I have been found ; all around me there were dropped by the ice glacier smaller stones and pebbles, sand and clay mud ; these formed my bed until I was unearthed by the boys who made the garden.

" If you will look at the time chart at the end of the book you will see that the later period is divided in spaces representing 500 years, commencing with the year 1926 and going backwards. When you get back to the line represented by 0 that is practically as far back as we can go and put a date to the event ; previous to that time is placed in ' ages,' to which we can only surmise dates, and these are labelled ' The pre-historic days.'

" One section is known as the ' Age of Metals,' when the inhabitant of that period worked in iron and bronze ; the section further back again is known as ' The Stone Age,' when the man made weapons out of stone to enable him to carry on in his daily life. The section further back still is the one in which I lived, and is called ' The Ice Age ' ; so that I am the oldest of all the subjects of this little book."

CHAPTER III.

The Roman Period.

FROM the reading of History, all boys and girls know that this land of ours was occupied by the Romans, about the time that Christ was born, nearly two thousands of years ago.

The Romans, to keep the people in subjection and under proper control, established camps and forts all over the land ; these camps and strongholds communicated with each other by means of roads, which generally ran in a straight direction, from one camp to the next.

That these Romans actually lived about here is quite true. On the top of Bucton Hill, Micklehurst, there are the remains of a supposed Roman encampment ; at Castleshaw, above Delph, there are the remains of another fort or camp, in the field behind the waterman's house on the banks of the Oldham Reservoir.

Some years ago the fort was excavated, and several finds were made. These " finds " are stored in the Oldham Museum, and photographs of the excavations are shown along with the specimens. In the Reference Library are copies of the report that was published.

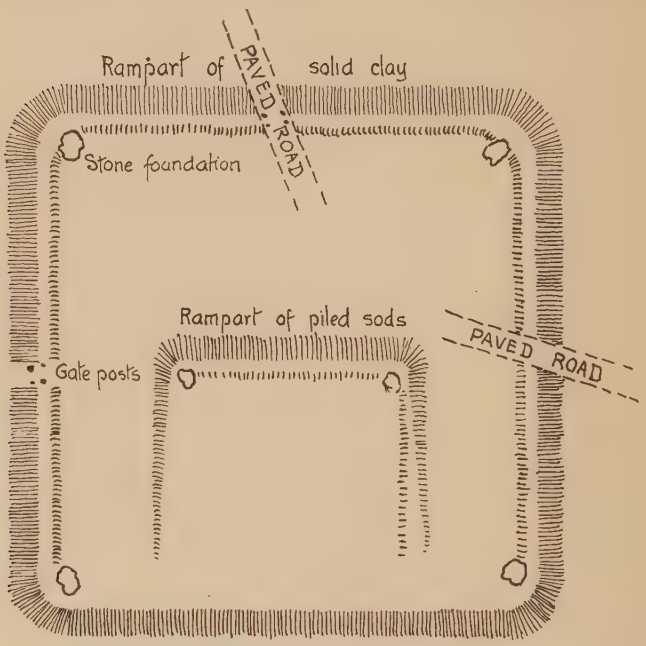
Whilst speaking about Castleshaw mention must be made of a tile which was found some time ago. This tile bears the inscription " COH. III. BR.", which suggests the garrison which once occupied the fort. The inscription stands for " Cohors Tertia Bracaraugustanorum," *i.e.*, " the Third Cohort of Auxiliary Troops from Bracara Augusta in Spain. The Cohort was in Britain in the years 104, 124, 146 A.D."—(A. W.)

It was the custom of the Roman authority to bring foreign legions to Britain, and in return to take legions of British soldiers to foreign lands, to help to maintain the recognised government, and power of Rome.

Castleshaw was supposed to be a day's journey from the fort of Manchester.

Along the hillside, travelling from Bucton in the direction of Greenfield, on the slope of Noon Sun, is a very old road track.

" This is in every way a true ' hillside ' road, winding about with strict relation to the natural obstacles of marsh or water, and the natural advantages of sand,



ROMAN FORTS AT CASTLESHAW

gravel, or outcrops of rock. But different from genuine tribal roads, it is paved in places with great blocks of stone, and a little knowledge of antiquities is enough to tell us that this pavement is typically Roman. The road itself was not planned by the Romans, but during

their occupation the traffic along this road was so great that the Romans found it worth while to add the improvement of their standard paving.

" It is obviously a pre-Roman road with a Roman pavement, and therefore definitely pre-historic."

Whilst wandering along this road during the summer-time (1926) there could be seen distinctly, in one or two places, the remains of this Roman pavement, though much displaced.

This old road is as near as we can get to view Bucton Castle without special permission. The land all around is watched over by gamekeepers, protecting the grouse.

Bucton Castle is one of the oldest relics of the past.

Dr. Aikin, writing in 1793, says : " It is situated on the north-west portion or edge of the great moss called Featherbed Moss, at about equal distances from Mottram and Saddleworth. It is of oval form, consisting of rampart and ditch, and stands on the summit of a mountain 1,126 feet in height, and very steep to the west and south. It commands a view over the south part of Lancashire, the whole of Cheshire, and easterly to West Nab in Yorkshire."

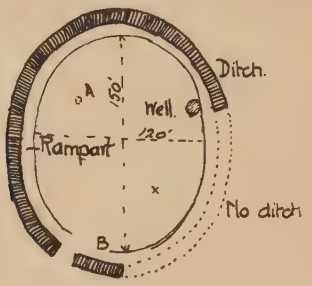
A more modern description by F. J. Stubbs, Esq., in the Oldham *Chronicle*, says : " Bucton Castle consists of an oval platform about 32 yards by 26 yards, surrounded first by a low mound or earthen wall, and then by a deep ditch ; this ditch encircles perhaps two-thirds of the inner platform ; on the Mossley side the hill itself is so steep that the builders found the ditch unnecessary and impossible.

" Examination shows that the makers worked on the plan of cutting an oval ditch, throwing up the excavated earth and rock to form an inner rampart. To-day, after the wear and tear of many centuries, the rampart is several feet high, and the greatest depth of the ditch is nearly fifteen feet. The inner circle is approached by a causeway on the south-eastern side.

" Viewed from the valley, or from most of the neighbouring hills, the castle appears to be at the precise summit

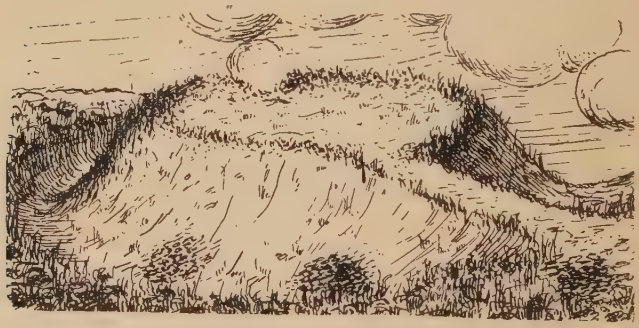
of the hill ; but when we reach the top it is clear that the oval is actually away from the hilltop."

Mr. Stubbs is inclined to put the Castle back to the period when Stonehenge was erected, B.C., and that it was constructed by the sun-worshippers. It is most



PLAN OF BUCTON CASTLE.

A—Site of 1730 Excavation. *B*—Pile of Masonry.



BUCTON, JUNE, 1926.

certainly of the pre-Roman period because of its oval shape ; Roman forts were rectangular.

To-day the earthworks are scheduled under the Ancient Monuments Act for preservation, and are safe from destruction.

A party of three visited Bucton on June 24, 1926. There is practically nothing to be seen beyond the moat

and the circular rampart ; the interior of the rampart—the enclosure—is all overgrown, rough and irregular, and filled up with the growth of vegetation for century after century.

The rough sketch gives a fair representation of the place as it stands to-day ; on the right of the mound the moat disappears, but on the left, for half-way round it, is well defined.

The Castle is in the direct line of route between the two forts of Castleshaw and Melandra, the fort near Glossop ; a beacon fire in time of need would quickly summon assistance.

During the " Pilgrimage of Grace " after the suppression of the lesser monasteries, men from the north marched towards the south to protest against this closure, and the fire on Bucton was one of the chain of beacons used by the rebels ; further use was made of the beacon to carry forth the joyful news of the defeat of " The Spanish Armada " in 1588.

There is a tradition that a great treasure of gold lies hidden beneath the castle mound. At intervals organised hunts have been made ; the excavations made by treasure hunters so far back as 1730 are still perfectly visible to-day.

One instance of a find was described by the Mottram schoolmaster, R. Wardleworth, writing in 1767 to his friend, John Collier, of Milnrow, who is better known by the name of " Tim Bobbin." The account is taken from Earwaker's " East Cheshire."

The find was made by a John Hayward, and Wardleworth, who was present, describes it thus : " In cutting up about a shovel's graft from the surface, the golden necklace came up, bright and fresh as though from the hands of the maker ; 18 large beads as large as bullocs (bullets) upon a loquet (locket) about the compass of a moidore." Not far away another man found a silver cup.

These treasures were claimed by Lord Dysart, then the Lord of the Manor.

With a little exercise of the imagination it is not difficult to conjure up the scene during the Roman occupation of the district. At different times along that paved way on the hillside would march the legions of Cæsar's armies, journeying from one camp to the other ; the long straight road in front, skirted by the forest of trees on the valley side, and the grim moorland rocks on the other.

In the early days of the invasion the ancient Briton would look on in amazement, probably hiding in the woods for fear. He would gaze open-eyed at the accoutrement of the Roman soldier, and his movement in unison ; the Briton would be dressed in rough skins, with perhaps his body stained with woad ; his few possessions of sheep or cattle would be driven to the thickest part of the forest in the valley for safety.

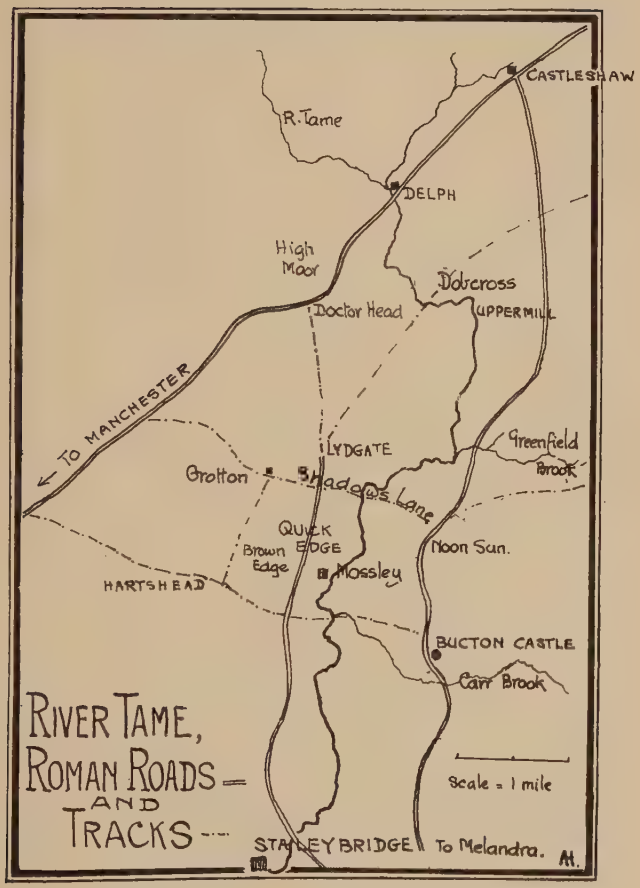
The Castle would be inhabited by British, Roman and Saxon in succession, and it is not surprising to know that relics of each ruling power have been found around the site.

Other Roman roads and tracks can be traced by looking at the map. At what is now Mossley Cross there was the junction of an ancient British track, which connected the earth fort of Bucton with the signal station at Hartshead. This well-known " Pike " was occupied by the Romans as a watch-tower or " Specula." (Andrew.)

The Roman road ran over Luzley ; a short time ago, beyond Arlies cottages, the workmen in digging down came upon the pavement of the old Roman road ; unfortunately it was broken up and destroyed. From Dr. Aikin's book we quote : " Near Mossley stands Hartshead Pike, a favourite and well-known object for the surrounding country, which is seen at a considerable distance, and in general has been supposed to be a sea-mark.

" It is situated on very high ground betwixt Oldham and Mossley, from whence the traveller has a most delightful view of the surrounding country.

" We have ascertained from very good authority that


CASTLESHAW
R. Tame
DELPH
High Moor
Dobcross
Doctor Head
UPPERMILL
TO MANCHESTER
LYDGATE
Greenfield
Brook
Grotton
Shadows Lane
QUICK
Brown Edge
EDGE
Moon Sun.
Mossley
HARTSHEAD
BUCTON CASTLE
Carr Brook
RIVER TAME,
ROMAN ROADS
AND
TRACKS
Scale = 1 mile
STALEY BRIDGE
To Melandra.
M.

it was formerly used as a beacon, and there are others in the neighbourhood to answer it.

" It was rebuilt of solid stone in 1758, and is of considerable height and circumference ; it is now (1793) split from top to bottom near half-a-yard in width.

" A few pounds laid out in repairs, if done in time, might preserve this pile for a century to come. On the top are the small remains of a weather-cock, probably a hart's head."

In the " Chronicles of Ashlynne " it is mentioned as " The erection of Canute's Tower—the crumbling monument of Canute and Henry the Second on the hill to the north of Ashlynne."

In connection with the tower there is a legend that once when Prince Henry was out hunting in this district with the Baron of Ashlynne, the Baron slew a fierce wehr wolf in protection of the Prince ; its head was sent to grace Canute's tower ; long after, when the head had rotted, one was carved from stone in the likeness of a stag or hart, and placed aloft on the top of the tower.

The present structure was built by public subscription in 1863, to commemorate the marriage of the then Prince of Wales, who afterwards succeeded Victoria, as Edward the VII.

Built into the outer wall of the present tower is a stone inscribed—

" Look well at me before you go,
And see you nothing at me throw."

The date on the stone is 1751, and it is evidently a stone out of the original column.

The old site is marked by the laying together of a few large grinding stones from the neighbouring sandpits ; these sandpits have been worked continuously for over two hundred years by the Marland family.

Another writer says : " The Pike was first used as a beacon ; although of less than a 1,000 feet in elevation, there is something in the position of the hill which enables it to be seen from a great distance ; that is why

HARTSHEAD PIKE.

it was chosen in preference to the higher one of Brownedge, which is close at hand."

To-day the " Pike " is slowly but surely going to ruin. Some time ago it was proposed to renovate the structure, but nothing has been done.

Probably at this period of the Roman occupation there would be a few inhabitants around the neighbourhood of Hartshead ; Mossley did not yet exist, and of its early beginnings there is no record to hand.

We use a word very often, in reference to letters, that the Romans left to us ; the word is " post."

This word takes us right away back to the Roman occupation of the country, for it was they who first established the system of " posts " for the rapid transport of communications.

The word " post " comes from the Latin word " positus," and means a fixed place or station ; the Romans established a chain of such posts, where a messenger, travelling on horseback, might exchange a tired horse for a fresh one.

For many a hundred years this method of sending letters by messengers, who travelled from post to post, was followed ; so speedy was the system considered to be that it is from those distant days that we get the expression " post haste."

The coming of railways put an end to the old posting system, but the word was kept and applied to the new system of sending letters.

Along that road on the Micklehurst side, and on the Hartshead side, the Roman post must have travelled time and time again ; probably the last time would be the carrying of the news of the coming withdrawal of the Roman troops, to the garrison at Castleshaw.

The system, having been introduced by the Romans, would be maintained by the Britons afterwards, and carried forward under various forms and conditions up to the present day.

CHAPTER IV.

Of the next period of history there is very little to relate. That the Saxons, Danes and Vikings occupied this territory there is no doubt ; the names of the rivers, Tame, the Diggle and the Chew, are of Saxon origin. (Baines.) And the names of Mossley and Luzley.

In 1914, February, a pure gold ring of the Viking period was found in the bed of the river at Nutbottom, Greenfield.

In the great Doomsday Book, compiled by order of William the Conqueror, the district of " Quick " is mentioned ; but it is spelled " Thoac " and " Tohac " ; in the year 1272 the spelling has become " Qwyke," and in 1312 the name is " Wyke."

The form of the word to-day is often heard as " Wick " among the people of Mossley, which is simply the old form of 1312 handed down from generation to generation.

The name probably arose from the Anglo-Saxon word " Cwic," meaning the wicken tree or wych elm ; there are a few specimens of this tree to be seen in the plantations even to-day.

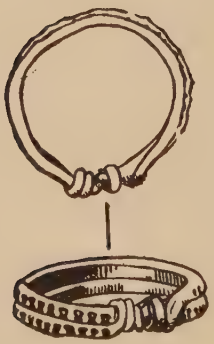
There is the same twisting of the letters in the word " cushion " ; many old people still call the article by the name of " wishen."

Another early record states that in 1312 there was let the messauge eight acres of land and eight acres of wood in Wyke. This " wood " is handed down to us to-day in the names of " Nield Wood," " Solomon Wood," " Baguley Wood," " Wood End," " Wood School," " Wood Well," and " Quick Wood."

There were many trees in Quick Wood as late as 1875 ; when the railway was made in 1849 Solomon Wood was covered with fine fir trees which the railway company cleared, using the timber for fencing all along the line.

In this period of the fourteenth century the district inhabitants were evidently occupied in corn growing and sheep rearing ; in the accounts of the estate of " The

River Nutbottom, Greenfield.



Viking Ring.

Facsimile of a pure gold ring of the Viking period, found in the bed of the river at Nutbottom, Greenfield, Feb., 1914.

Manor of Quick " it is stated that in 1334 a tax of every ninth fleece and every ninth sheaf was levied to defray the cost of wars ; the wars of that time were the Scotch and Welsh wars under Edward III.

From a letter written July 21, 1829, some interesting information can be gleaned about the woollen industry and its introduction into England and this district.

" To Messrs. Kenworthy and Co., Clothworkers at Strines and elsewhere.

" I here transmit unto you the rise of the woollen manufacture in England, viz., Anno Regis Edward Tertii, Anno Domini, 1336. Our clothing was no better than Freezes ; we knew nothing of curious drapery, for all the subsidies from the wool that was sold into Flanders our Kings had as a grant to live on ; nay the men of Flanders enriched themselves so much by the English wool, that the Duke of Burgundy instituted the ' Order of the Golden Fleece,' when indeed the fleece was ours, but the gold was theirs. King Edward married the daughter of the Earl of Hainault. Emissaries or agents were sent out by the king into the above country and tempted the Dutch apprentices to leave their own country and come into England ; for these apprentices were badly used, having now and then a few herrings and mouldy cheese. These emissaries told these apprentices that they should live on fat beef and mutton, and that the yeomen in England would not disdain to marry their daughters to them. Now, many of the Dutch servants left their own country and came to England and brought over their trade and tools with them. Happy the Yeoman's house which one of these Dutchmen did enter, being so much wealth and industry ; yea, those Yeomen who obtained them soon became gentlemen getting great estates to themselves.

" The King disperseth the Dutch up and down the country that the clothing might be had the better."

The first man who set up woollen looms in England in this reign was one of these emigrants called John Kemp.

I am informed that a prime Dutch cloth-maker in Gloucester had the surname of " Web " given to him by

the King Edward ; that the millers who came over were called " Fullers."

Here the Dutch found fuller's earth (no better in Christendom), a great commodity in the making of woollen cloth ; so that nature seems to point out our land for the staple of drapery.

These manufactures came to more perfection soon after when the Duke de Alva drove more Dutch into England.

The first " dressers " and " pressers " in Saddleworth were at " Little Hague," near Quick.

* * * * * * * * *

Some rules and laws about the sale of woollen cloth follow on the letter, which finishes—

" I am, sir, your obedient servant, An old Borocan.

July 21. Anno Xty, 1829."

In the year 1309, in the Ashton-under-Lyne records, it states that Henry, son of William de Mossley, claimed land which afterwards became known as Mossley.

Before this period is left it is something for children to know (others too) that great struggles have been made from time to time to see that they have a fair chance in life.

" In the year 1391, in the reign of Richard II., we find in the old records that the House of Commons sent a petition to the King asking him to forbid ' neifs and villeins '—the common labourers of those days—' to send their children to school.'

" The request was refused, and in 1406 was passed an Act stating that ' every man or woman, of whatever state or condition, shall be free to set their son or daughter to take learning at any school that pleaseth them within the realm.'

" This was a severe blow to the landowners who wished to obtain cheap labour and to keep the children of their tenants tied to the soil."—(Schoolmaster.)

It is interesting to note the following prices of farm produce taken from a parliamentary record of 1314 :

24 eggs for 1d. ; 4 pigeons for 1d. ; 1 fat hen for 1d. ; 2 chickens for 1d. ; 1 fat goose for 2½d. ; a fat hog, 3s. 4d. ; a cow from 12s. to 16s.

Whilst we are on the subject of woollen it is of interest to think of a phrase which is often used, when we say " a man is on tenter hooks." The modern meaning is for the person to be on the " qui vive " ; on the brim of expectancy ; to be stretched out to the uttermost. This phrase is taken from the woollen weaver, who in one of his processes of finishing the cloth, stretches it upon a frame, in which hooks are fixed to keep the cloth in position ; the frame is known as a tenter.

In some of the old deeds there is sometimes special mention made of a " tenter field," where this stretching took place.

In the bill for the sale of some land around Haddens there is mentioned among the list of fields, a " wool wall field"; where it was situated, there was a series of steps like a gallery ; these steps were used for drying the fleeces.

Someone may have heard of this field and its position.

From this it is evident that around Haddens at that time and previous the woollen industry must have been carried on by the then farmer-weavers.

In this same sale, which was held at The Ram Inn, Lydgate, August, 1795, other fields are put down as " Great Haddens " and " Little Haddens." " Little Hague " or " Haigh " must be a very old homestead ; in 1772 John and Martha Kenworthy lived there.

CHAPTER V.

Most of the information in this chapter is taken from a very old book, published in 1823, "Butterworth's History of Oldham and Ashton District."

It is interesting because it relates the various conditions under which the ordinary people of the early days lived.

Scattered all over England were houses of a larger type than ordinary; these were the "Manor Houses" where the "Lord of the Manor" lived. The lord belonged to nearly all the land in the district, and the tenants' names formed the "Rent Roll."

The lord had probably to give an account of his rents and possessions to the King's officers.

Attached to this book is a copy of the Rent Roll of the lord of the Manor of Ashton, Sir John de Assheton.

In this Mossley district nearly all the land was under the rule of this gentleman, and from the Roll the following particulars have been taken; sometimes the original spelling has been adhered to; in the first part of the chapter I have taken extracts, and in the latter part an explanation of the conditions and service.

* * * * * * * * *

In 1422 it is stated that "Jak of the Leghes" held two-thirds of Mossley, and Richard Unton the remaining part.

"Jak of the Leghes" had to give a whole service, the pressent 20d., the Ffarm, 39s. 6d., and for Lusley, 6d.

Richard Unton for the third part of Mossley had to pay 20s. "Light Birches," the hill facing Lees Road, on the left hand when facing Grotton, was then in the tenancy of Adam de Tetlow.

When the excavations for sewering along Waterton were being carried out a few years ago (1901–2) many trunks of trees were unearthed; a good number were found to be of the silver birch species, and the bark was even then in an excellent state of preservation. These

trees evidently account for the name of the hill, which is handed down to us to-day—but the name is all.

" Lussley " at this time was unfenced or " common land," according to this rent roll, and in the time of Henry the Sixth the tenants in this vicinity had a privilege allowed them, for a small acknowledgment, of sending their cattle to graze " in common."

In this old covenant between Sir John de Assheton and his tenants it was agreed " that the swine be ringed from seedling time until harvest be in."

" Any swine taken in default (doing damage) the owner shall lose to the lord the sum of 4d."

The number of swine was limited.

" Every tenant that brews to sell, and the Milner, shall hold three swine ; every tenant that holds land in the fields shall hold two swine ; and every tenant that holds no land shall have one swine."

* * * * * * * * *

When the harvest time came round, " the tenants of the said lordship shall multer (mulcture) at the sixteenth vessel, and go to none other milne, but to the lord's milnes ; and which of them is found guilty of going to any other milne, they shall be highly amerced and make fine at the lord's will."

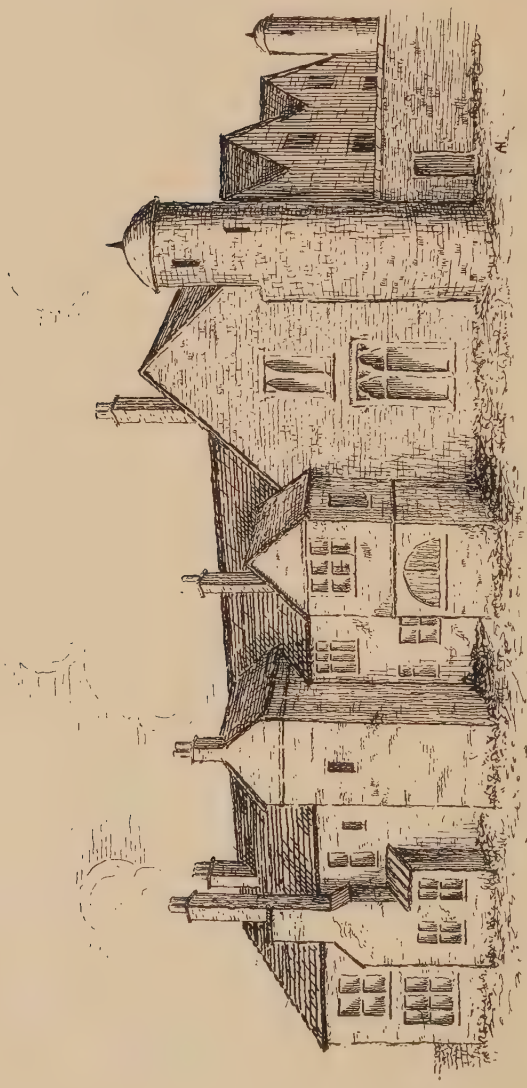
" When the lord's corn come to the milne, he shall put all men out of their grist, and take their corn out of the hopper, if any be therein."

" And his corn shall be ground next at all times before all men, when it comes to the milne, without multer or paying service to the milner, but at his list if he likes, and curtasy, to give to the milner."

* * * * * * * * *

The church which was attended by everybody in the district was the Old Parish Church of Ashton. Certain seats were allotted to the women, and so settle the order of precedence.

" The first form upon the north in the nether-end of the kirke, to be occupied by certain tenants and their



Ashton Old Hall (The Manor House of the Assheton's).

servants ; and then the second to others, and so on up to the sixth."

The persons who interest us are Nanna Windebank, who occupied the farm near Hartshead, and whose seat in the church was " on the fourth form on the north side ; and Uxor* Johannis de Leghes, Uxor de Soureker and their servants on the second form on the north side."

* * * * * * * * *

There must have been some business carried on in that time, because on the 13th of February, 1413, in the 14th year of Henry the Sixth, " By patent under the Duchy Seal, the King grants to Sir John de Assheton and his heirs for ever, two fairs yearly ; one on the eve of the feast and the morrow of St. Swithin, and the other on the eve of the feast and the morrow of St. Martyne, and a weekly market on Monday, with all profits, franchises, etc., thereto belonging."

So our ancestors tramped to Ashton market on the Monday afternoon in those far-off days, even as their descendants keep that same half-day for " swinging the key," in these days.

* * * * * * * * *

Dr. Hibbert, of Edinburgh, has written thus upon the tenants : " Sir John de Assheton's tenants at will (some of whom lived in Mossley district) were bound to him by obligations of a base or servile nature, yet determinate. They were excluded from partaking in the honours of the ' tented field,' being destined on the manor of their lord to perform the duties of civil and agricultural drudgery, such as ploughing the lord's lands, carting the lord's fuel and manure, etc."

The lands were rented for " twenty winter terms " ; any tenement might be given up by a year's notice to the lord, at the rent day of Martinmas, on the condition that it was resigned in as good condition as when first entered upon ; if not the lord or his officers might direct four or six sworn men to visit the houses or closes occupied by

* Uxor = Wife (Latin).

the tenant who was held responsible for the sum that they might adjudge as necessary for the repair, as well as for the deterioration that the land might have sustained. The rent of the largest farm was 39s. 6d. per year, and the lowest cottage tenements 2s. each year. The present to the lord at Yole, Yule (our Christmas) entitled the tenant to partake in the annual feast in the great hall at Ashton. The origin of this comes from the Scandinavians, who knew of no other tribute than a capitation tax ; they probably subjected their newly acquired Saxon vassals to the same impost they themselves had been accustomed, by inserting it in their rentals ; we find traces of this, the most ancient of all duties, in the old rent rolls of many other manors in England, as well as in the Assheton rent rolls. In some manor houses is to be observed an elevation of the floor, at the extremity of the great hall, or a gallery which stretches one side of the room, with the intention that it should accommodate the lord and his family, so that they might not be annoyed by the coarse rustic freedoms which the tenants would be too apt to take with them during the hours of conviviality.

The drinking horns bore the names of the Saxons or Danes whom the Normans had ousted out of their possessions ; ale would flow right merrily, and the wooden bowl would pass freely through the hands of the tenants, among whom we find Robin the Cropper, Jack the Spencer, Elyn the Rose, Nan of the Windybank, etc., who owed suit and service, all clad in their best hoods and brown woollen jackets and petticoats.

The ancient musical instruments used in Lancashire were a kind of a fiddle, not of the present form, and a stringed instrument called " Virginals." The provincial songs of that period, few of which lasted less than half-an-hour, rehearsed the deeds of Launcelot du Lake, and his conquest of the Giant Tarquin at the Castle of Manchester ; Ranulph of Chester and his wars in the Holy Land.

In order to preserve as much as possible the degree of decorum that was necessary at such meetings, there

was frequently introduced a diminutive pair of stone stocks, of about eighteen inches in length, for confining within them the fingers of the unruly. This instrument was entrusted to the general prefect of manorial festivities, the "King of Misrule," whose office it was to punish all who exceeded his royal notions of decency.

Accordingly such a character appears among the list of Sir John's tenants, under the name of "Hobbe, the King."

It is observed that these entertainments were not supported by the munificence of the landlord, but by the several contributions of the tenants, rendered under the name of presents; on which account a festivity of this kind, that was wrung from the pockets of the vassals, acquired in derision the appellation of "drink lean." It is evident from an examination of the presents collected for these drink leans that, if they did not leave a handsome surplus for the lord, they would at least pay the "expences" of the table.

The "service" so profitable to the lord was familiarly called "boon-work." Hence an old adage, still retained in this part of the country, when a man is supposed to be working for nothing, "that he has been served like a boon-shearer."

Another service was that "they should pay a principal at their death, to wit, the best beast they have, next after Holy Kirke."

This is evidently a "heriot," derived from the Latin word "herus," intimating that it was a tribute belonging to the lord.

Another authority finds a Saxon equivalent for the word, signifying a horse, because that animal constitutes the first heriot. In the earliest period of feudality, a superior possessed an "uncontrouled" dominion over the entire property of his vassal; yet, when slain in battle in the company of his lord, a remission was made, in consideration of his faithful services, of any other claim upon his property than what might remain upon the field; this usually consisted of a horse, which was accepted as a release, or a heriot. The principle of

heriotism, thus introduced, was subsequently extended to that class of dependants who were retained in their lord's employ to perform the baser services of the manor. As their property consisted of cattle, the heriot due to the lord was the best beast, cow or horse, of which the tenant might die possessed; this condition being fulfilled, every further claim upon the goods of the deceased was remitted. It was usual to drive the beast before the corpse of the deceased at the funeral procession to the church. In proportion as feudality acquired a civil establishment, this oppressive relic of ancient military subjection would be found particularly galling. The lord's "heriot" came "next after Holy Kirke." The Church came first in its claims upon the estate of the deceased.

The obligation to grind corn at the lord's mill was called "Socome," "Sucken," or "Soken"; a tenant of the name of "John of the Edge" was the milner; he had to pay for the two mills the annual rent of 16s. 4d., "the mills to be held up at the cost of the lord" (repaired). The miller's remuneration was the sixteenth vessel of corn grown at home, but on other corn it was the twenty-fourth vessel, because of the saving in the fuel for drying purposes; it was known as the "love-sucken," meaning a privileged obligation.

The last regulation of the mill strikingly elucidates the feudal manners of the fifteenth century, since it enforces the concession that is expected on all occasions to the convenience of a superior. One individual deserves special notice, the name in the rent roll of "William the Arrowsmith." This distinct profession of a man points to the Lancashire bowmen as mentioned in "Flodden Field"; and evidently bowmen in and around this district who practised the art.

The regulations with regard to the forms and seats in church was to satisfy the demand for places, together with a recognition of the social sphere of life in which the women moved.

In spring, after the fields had been manured or dressed with "marl" (clay) preparatory to the sowing of wheat

the populace had "guisings" or "marlings"; these were "ale feasts."

For the celebration of "gyst" ale of a township, a contribution was taken from all ranks of society.

The Lord of the Manor or the Squire came forward and announced the sum that he intended to give.

The treasurer of the feast exclaimed, "A largesse!"

The populace demanded with one voice, "From whom?"

The sum was not then actually published; but it was vauntingly proclaimed that the donor, who had always on these occasions the title of lord prefixed to his name, had contributed a part of several thousands of pounds.

After the collection had been made an immense garland was formed of every flower that the season produced, and was decked with a profusion of ribands; but the number and variety of silver vessels which were suspended from every part of it constituted its chief attraction.

The villagers, who were overwhelmed with rustic finery, then formed themselves into a procession, in which they were attended by an "arbiter elegantiarum" named the "King."

THE JESTER.

The "Fool" was an indispensable character; a grotesque cap, a tail hanging to the ground, the usual appendage of a bell behind, and a formidable mask, constituted the peculiarities of his apparel. He was in ancient times mounted on a "hobby horse," and his office, which was a lucrative one, from the money that he collected, was named "hob-riding."

Thus in the Manor roll of Assheton, Jack the Mercer paid to the lord for such a privilege the annual sum of 6s. 8d.

JACK THE MERCER "HOB-RIDING."

At certain times of the year the lord of the Manor would hold his court ; twelve men to form the jury would be summoned by the chief seneschal or steward, with the Baron as the judge.

At the beginning of the court the steward would call out in a loud voice, " O YEZ " three times.

The cases that would come up for decision would be " neglect of service due to the lord ; for the heriot not forthcoming ; for allowing cattle to stray ; fines for neglecting to repair broken-down fences, or for failing to keep the portion of the road allotted to the tenant in proper condition."

If any juror were absent then over his name was written " In meserecordia," and he was amerced in the sum of 2d. The fines would be so many days to work for the lord the next summer free of charge, or so much money in lieu.

Taken from one of the old records of one of these courts is : " We do amerce S. M. for not repairing his length of road from Cockshoot Lane End to Lilly Lanes, in the sum of £1 19s. 11d."

The officials of the lord to manage the estate were elected at the Michaelmas court.

* * * * * * * * *

Before the rent roll is left, it is an item of interest to read the names of the tenants, because from these came many of our own surnames.

There are such names as William the Walker ; John of the Edge ; William, Richard's son ; Roger the Smith ; Thomas the Cook ; Roger the Baxter (he had a bake-house) ; William the Arrowsmith ; Jak the Spencer, who collected the tolls, etc. ; Jack the Mercer ; Jak the Hind ; John the Slater ; John the Cropper, etc.

The names mentioned above can all be traced to the occupation the man followed.

Some other names indicate the place of residence, as Dale and Wood ; Wilson is Scandinavian, and means the son of Will ; Dixon and Johnson are similarly formed ; Watkins is a little Wat, the " kin " being a diminutive ; Collins is of a like nature ; Godwin is pure Anglo-Saxon. It will be something for you to do to find out if possible the origin of your own surname.

CHAPTER VI.

According to the rent roll of Sir John de Assheton, it is found that in the fifteenth century the land was divided into farms and let to various tenants upon certain conditions.

In the last chapter the general conditions attached to the farm tenants are set down ; in this chapter the particular conditions come in for consideration.

The old farm, now pulled down, formerly situated at Windybank, near Hartshead, facing the present waterworks, was in 1442 in the tenancy of a lady, who has already been mentioned as " Nan of Windybank."

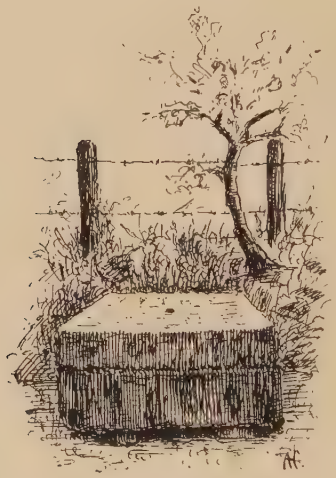
She held the farm from Sir John de Assheton for which she had to give service, a rent of two shillings and a present of fourpence ; in addition she had tithes to pay.

Tithes were paid to the parson, for the Church, and consisted of three kinds : the produce of the soil, as corn or fruit ; the produce of animals, as milk or young ; and personal tithes, as the profits on handicraft or merchandise.

The tithes were calculated as a tenth part of the goods and were to maintain the parish priest ; these tithes were paid at certain times of the year.

Below Hartshead, at the bottom of Twarl Lane, is to be seen the old Tithe Stone of this district; here the farmers and the tenants would meet the parson or his representative and pay over their dues for the year. The produce was stored in special barns—"Tithe-barns."

Tithes are still paid in some parts of the land to-day; but as a rule they have been commuted into one tithe—



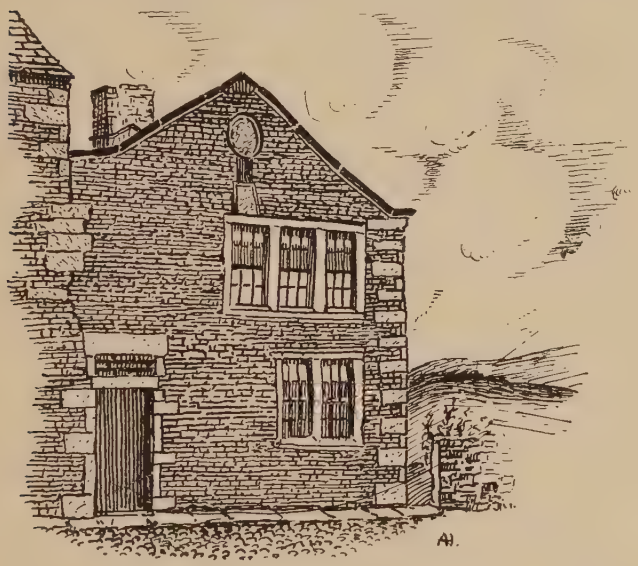
TITHE STONE

rent charge—a sum of money charged on the land and payable by the landlord, half-yearly.

"Service" is mentioned as a condition in the lease; this service was free labour for the lord of the Manor. Nan had to plough two days in the ploughing season on the lord's land without payment; when the time came for harrowing the land her free service was one day; in the harvest time she had to shear for four days, and to cart corn one day; and during the autumn she had to

cart ten loads of "turve" from the bog-land to the Manor House.

From this we can argue very accurately that the land around us to-day was at that time under cultivation and used for corn growing; indeed, if you look at many



WINDYBUNK HOUSE.

of the fields, it is possible to trace the furrows of the plough to-day (although overgrown with grass) in the shape of depressions running at regular intervals across the fields.

In the week time Nan and her servants would be occupied in attending to the farm lands and the cattle and sheep.

On Sunday Nan attended the old parish church at Ashton, and, according to the record, was entitled to a certain seat "in the nether end of the kirke."

On Sundays when church was over the men were expected to assemble at the "butts," to employ their leisure hours in practising archery on the village green.

In the reign of Edward IV. it was enacted that every Englishman, whatever his station, should own a bow in his own height, and to keep it always ready for use, and to provide for his son's practising the art from the age of seven. Butts were ordered to be erected in every township where the inhabitants were to shoot " up and down " every Sunday and feast-day under penalty of one halfpenny. The money in these days was of silver ; all pennies were of silver and worth much more than the penny of to-day ; a man's wage for a day's work was then twopence. The pennies were marked with a cross, and if a halfpenny were required the penny was broken into halves ; it was during this period that the 240 pence to the £1 originated, having something to do with the silver weight and the pennyweight.

A rather interesting form of giving a receipt for money or goods was in use about this time ; as the majority of people could neither read nor write the receipts took a tangible form.

When Nan had made a payment for which it was necessary to have a receipt, a twig of hazel was cut from the nearest tree, and upon this twig were cut varying sizes of notches denoting the payments ; when all was concluded the twig was split down the centre, and each of the two parties claimed half ; if there was any dispute later, all that was necessary was to bring the two halves together once more, and any attempt at cheating was at once apparent.

This stick was known as a " tally " ; we have the word in use to-day signifying agreement. In the House of Commons there is a case containing several specimens of " tally-sticks."

The servants of Nan in the autumn would be occupied in threshing the corn. The ears of corn would be placed on the floor of the barn, and the servant man would beat the mass with a flail until the grains were free from the ear. The " flail " was a stick about three feet long, to which was fastened by a leather thong another stick two feet in length ; this was then raised in the air and

brought down with a crash upon the mass of ears on the floor. It was very dusty and dirty work.

The task of separating the chaff from the wheat was done upon a windy day ; the mixture of wheat and husks was thrown up into the air by hand shovel, when the action of the wind blowing through the barn carried the lighter chaff away, whilst the heavier grains of corn fell to the floor. When the corn had been sifted properly it would be carried away in baskets or bushels and the tally of the harvest of corn would be entered upon the stick by notches.

Later on would come the business of grinding the corn ; the mill was a large saucer-shaped stone into which fitted another of a convex shape ; the upper stone had fitted to it a handle ; the worker grasped this and walked round and round grinding the corn. This form of mill was called a rotary mill.

If only a small quantity of corn was to be ground then a small hand-mill, called a " quern," was used ; the quern did not drop out of use until quite modern times.

The hills around Mossley are a portion of the Pennines ; the huge rocks and layers of stone are known as " millstone grit."

When we produced our own grain there were many flour mills, and the stone on the mountain was found very suitable for making the heavy circular stone for the top, hence its name.

According to the old deeds issued to the tenants like Nan, they had to grind corn at their lord's corn-mill, subject to " grist " or " mulcture " of one-sixteenth of the amount to be ground.

Mr. C. E. Higson writes :—

" The original corn-mill for the Manor of Ashton, to which the people of this district would go, was situate on the north bank of the Tame, and on the same site its successor, which had acquired the name of Ashton Old Mill, existed until a very recent date. In the course of time, as the population increased, another corn-mill was built in the hamlet of Alt, for the use and con-

venience of the northern part of the parish, in which Mossley stands.

" It was a water-mill with two pairs of stones, and other appliances ' for grinding corn, drying oats, and dressing flour and meal in a proper and expeditious manner.'

" The New Mill, as it was usually called, stood in the romantic valley of the Rocher, and was turned by the River Medlock. Near by was a kiln where the grain was dried, and a convenient dwelling for the miller had also been provided.

This corn-mill disappeared long ago, but its site is still spoken of as New Mill, and the ascent adjoining is the Mill Brow ; and the land whereon stood the drying kiln is known to this day as the Kiln Green.

" In 1760 it is stated that all Lady Stamford's tenants in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, being upwards of 400 in number, were compelled by their leases to grind all their malt, corn and grain at one or other of the two mills."

Cheese-making has become a lost art in this district to-day, though the cubular blocks of ashlar stone can be seen lying forlorn and forgotten in or around many an ancient farmyard and fold, bearing silent witness that a cheese-press was once a necessary and useful portion of the equipment of the farm.

The old stone of the cheese-press belonging to that historic place, Windybunk, can still be seen at Knott Hill Waterworks, in the garden of Mr. J. Travis, the waterman.

At the season of Yule, which corresponds to our Christmas, Nan had to take to the Hall her present of fourpence, " and the lord of the manor shall feed all his said tenants and their wives upon Yule day at the dinner if them like for to come ; but the said tenants and their wives though it be for their ease not for to come they shall send neither man nor woman in their name but if he be their son or their daughter dwelling with them to the dinner ; ffor the lord is not bounden to feed all save only the good man and the good wife."

On special holidays for the amusement of the people the sports included " bull-baiting" and " cock-fighting."

In bull-baiting a bull was tethered to a post by a rope or chain about ten yards in length; dogs specially trained for the purpose were then set to attack the bull; it was simply a fight between the animals for victory, with the bull penalised. The bull was further handicapped by having the tips of his horns covered with blunt iron sheathes, so that his sharp horns should not wound the dogs. There is a pair of these blunt iron coverings for the horns in the Oldham Public Museum.

It is from this specially-trained dog of years ago that we have the breed of bulldogs of to-day, though their original purpose has been abolished.

The other form of amusement consisted in setting two game-cocks one against the other in a specially-prepared "pit." The fight was generally continued until one or other of the birds was the victor. In the eighteenth century, in order that more excitement could be aroused, the birds were sometimes fitted with extra spurs of silver or steel.

Both these forms of sport (?) were made unlawful in the early part of the nineteenth century.

From *John O' London's Weekly* the following extract is taken :—

"Cock-fighting is one of our oldest 'sports.' It was well known to the Greeks and Romans of classical times, and in all probability it was the latter who introduced it to us.

"For many centuries it was an immensely popular pastime, and was only suppressed by Act of Parliament in 1834. In the reign of James the First it was openly patronised by the highest in the land. Famous fighting cocks lived in as dazzling a blaze of limelight then as do famous racehorses of to-day. The cocks were put in training as soon as they showed signs of promise; at the age of a month he was sprinkled every morning with burnt rosemary, and then taken for a constitutional on a grass plot.

"Directly his comb appeared it was cut away and the scar rubbed with butter. Should he crow too soon he was scornfully rejected, for a good fighter never raises

his voice until late in life. If, however, he continued to show promise, he was jealously guarded, and fed on cheese parings, chopped leeks and toast dipped in wine.

" The preparation of the birds was cutting off the long feathers of the neck and tail, clipping the wings, and smoothing and sharpening the beak and heels with a knife. It was not until the eighteenth century that refinements of cruelty, such as metal spurs, were introduced into the sport.

" The Royal Cockpit in Tufton Street, London, was filthily dirty and gloomy, and was approached through one of the vilest neighbourhoods of Westminster. Loafers of the most ruffianly type used to stand in groups around the doors from morning to night. In spite of the attendant squalor and darkness the cream of the aristocracy of those days would gather round to see the ' fun.' "

* * * * * * * * *

In an old record of 1618 (in the reign of James the First) called " The Fifteenth Book " for the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, it is stated that Mossley was divided into twelve allotments ; the names of the holders, the assessments and the rents were as follows :—

John Sandiforth	19	acres	rent 2½d.
John Stalkard	15	,,	,, 2¼d.
Peter Winterbottom (junior)	2	,,	,, ½d.
James Walker	27	,,	,, 3d.
Ralph Walker	1	,,	,, ¼d.
John Heape	1½	,,	,, ½d.
Edmund Chadwick.....	3¼	,,	,, ¾d.
Hugh Schofield	4	,,	,, ¾d.
Barnard Wilde	3	,,	,, ½d.
Nicholas Beswick	25	,,	,, 3d.
Robert Heaward.....	27	,,	,, 3d.
Robert Oldham.....	1¼	,,	,, ½d.

The entire land thus allotted in Mossley amounted to 129 acres at a total rental of 1s. 5½d.; Hartshead at this time comprised 288 acres with a rental of 3s. 3¼d. ; Luzley contained 421 acres with a total rent of 4s. 6d.

To-day the acreage of Mossley, according to the map, is 3,624 acres.

CHAPTER VII.

REFERRING to the history by Dr. Aikin, written in 1793, he says: "Mossley is a considerable village with upwards of 100 houses, many of them large and well built, chiefly of stone. It is about three miles from Ashton, in the high road to Huddersfield, with a large chapel in the gift of or under the Rector of Ashton.

MOSSLEY, 1760. SHOWING THE OLD CHURCH.
From a painting in possession of Mrs. J. E. Sherwood, Hartlepool.

"A little above Staley Hall, on the Lancashire side of the Tame, stands Scout Mill, a place well known to the surrounding neighbourhood, partly from its very rural and romantic situation, and partly for its melancholy and unfortunate inhabitants. For many years it has been in the occupation of Mr. Wilson, a respectable man,

now very advanced in life, who has long had the care of insane persons, but has now in a great measure declined it. A few are still under the care of his son.

"The mill is now used in the cotton branch. It is descended to from the turnpike road near Mossley by a long steep hill, with a lofty broken ground, nearly perpendicular to the river, overhung by a fine wood. There is a beautiful fall of water at the weir. In the distance can be seen the high hill on which Bucton Castle stood. The river Tame abounds with trout. It is also of the highest utility to the machinery of the woollen and cotton factories of the neighbourhood, it being reckoned that in the space of ten miles from Ashton there are near upon 100 mills upon this stream and its tributary branches.

"Staley valley has long been famous for woollen cloth, dyers and pressers, as well as weavers; here and there in this neighbourhood commences the woollen manufacture which extends in various directions as we proceed to Saddleworth.

"The people of Ashton and district about sixty years ago (before 1793) were almost wholly employed in spinning cotton wefts for check makers or twist to make fustian warps. They likewise furnished single cotton harder thrown to make warps for slight goods. Of late they have fallen more into the practice of making twist and warps for velverets, cotton thick-sets, etc."

From 1700 to 1800 the village of Mossley must have increased rather rapidly; in 1773 the place was only a small hamlet, whilst in 1821 the return shows that there were 300 houses in the village, and the population was returned as 575 males and 637 females = 1,212. This was the time when the gradual change from the woollen to the cotton manufacture occurred.

"The raw materials come by land carriage from Manchester, and made goods are sent thither to the Tuesday's markets. A number of hands are also employed by the 'putters out' on account of the merchants in Manchester.

"The gains are from 2d. a day for young children to 3s. to 4s. 6d. for grown people. Women will sometimes earn 16s. or 17s. per week by spinning with a jenny.

"It is rather curious to note the estimated number of persons engaged in the cotton industry at this time, 1793.

Number of water-mills or machines	153
Hand jennys consisting of 80 spindles each..	20,070

"These establishments, when in full work, are estimated to give employment to about 26,000 men, 31,000 women, and 53,000 children in spinning alone.

"In all the subsequent stages of the manufacture the number of persons employed is estimated at 133,000 men, 59,000 women, and 48,000 children, making an aggregate of 159,000 men, 90,000 women and 101,000 children; in all, 350,000 persons employed in the cotton industry."

Those figures are worth more than a passing glance; to-day we have eliminated the child from the mill, and the total number of persons employed in this industry must approach some millions. Manufacturers at that time took apprentices into the business. These apprentices were taken from those families which could pay a moderate fee; by an indenture, dated 1695, the fee paid appears to be sixty pounds, the young man being bound to serve seven years. All apprentices were obliged to undergo a vast deal of laborious work, such as turning warp mills, carrying goods on their shoulders through the streets, and the like.

An eminent manufacturer of that age used to be in his warehouse before six in the morning, accompanied by his children and his apprentices. At seven they all came into breakfast, which consisted of one large dish of water-pottage made of oatmeal, water, and a little salt, boiled thick and poured into a dish; at the side was a pan or basin of milk, and the master and apprentices, each with a wooden spoon in his hand, without loss of time, dipped into the same dish and thence into the

Oldest dated house
1659. Mossley Bottoms.

milk pan, and as soon as it was all finished they all returned to work.

In a manufacturer's private account book are found the following items : Journey to Scarborough, £26 18s. 9d.; hire of a coach, £13 6s. 2d. Evidently travelling in those days was expensive.

Scarborough was visited for sea bathing.

Another item : Paid for gloves at a funeral, £2 5s.

In the expenses for the year 1702 appears for the first time a charge of ten shillings for coffee and tea.

From an enumeration made in 1775–1793 the following is the list of houses in the several districts paying the window taxes :—

Hartshead	37
Mossley	65
Luzley and Towracre	40

This window tax was a payment made to the Government if the house contained more than six windows. It was first imposed in 1695 ; increased in 1815 ; reduced in 1823 ; and repealed in 1851. In many old houses of that period there can be seen to-day plenty of windows which were bricked up to avoid payment of the tax.

" Coals are got at the very edge of the town (Ashton) in abundance. At a short distance from Ashton on the Manchester Road is an extensive moss, from the edges of which the surrounding poor cut the turf, which supplies them with fuel ; the turf is cut away till the diggers come at about ten feet depth to a tolerable soil of loam, which on proper improvement becomes good meadow land. The moss itself is a shaking bog, which nevertheless can be crossed in any season, and probably might be made solid ground by means of judicious draining. Red fir trees are frequently found in it, which being fresh and full of turpentine, serve when split the purpose of candles to the poor ; also numbers of large oak trees, perfectly sound and as black as ebony.

CANAL LOCK HOUSE, MOSSLEY. (*Photo by Mrs. E. Leighton*

" The price of coal at the pit is 5d. per cwt."

We have not much coal industry in the Mossley district ; the only pit properly developed was " Broadcarr," which was opened in 1843. Attempts have been made at different times to find coal in the Dingle, and at Brownedge, the " breast-high " facing Lees Road, and Hartshead, but nothing much of value was obtained.

The coal from Broadcarr pit was carried in panniers by donkeys to the districts surrounding. One old resident has stated that he could remember seeing donkeys travelling one behind the other, trailing down the " sheep track " on the hillside facing Lees Road, on their way to Delph and Dobcross with panniers of coal on either side.

* * * * * * * * *

Long before the railway passed through Mossley the trade in coal and cotton was by means of the canal. This canal forms a means of communication between the two seas, *via* Liverpool and Leeds. The Act for its construction was passed in 1794, with further Acts in 1800 and 1806. It passes under the mountainous district known as " Standedge."

The L. & N.W.R. gained possession of the canal in 1847.

The original canal tunnel was 3 miles 135 yards, and is the highest canal in the country ; the length of the tunnel level is 4 miles. When the new double tunnel for the railway was made in 1890–1894 a length of 32 yards was taken off the canal tunnel at the Diggle end. There is no towpath through the tunnel, and the boats are propelled through by the boatmen, or " leggers " as they are called, from the roof or sides, the boatmen lying down on their backs with their feet touching the planks of the roof, the strength of the leg being the motive power.

The time taken to travel through the tunnel varies from 1½ hours to 4 hours, according to the weight of the

cargo and the number of men engaged in the work. There are four wides or passing-places in the tunnel.

The two extremities of the canal are the Ashton-under-Lyne canal on the western side, and Sir John Ramsden's canal on the eastern side to the Calder.

The general direction of the canal is north-east.

From Ashton it takes its course parallel to the Tame, often crossing its windings ; thence through Stalybridge

[*Photo by Mrs. E. Leighton.*

THE CANAL, SCOUT TUNNEL.

and Mossley and enters Yorkshire in the manufacturing township of Saddleworth.

The extreme length of the canal is a little short of 19¾ miles ; the canal rises 438 feet 10 inches from Huddersfield to Marsden by 42 locks in 8 miles, and falls through a series of 32 locks 338 feet 1½ inches from Marsden to Ashton in less than 9 miles.

CHAPTER VIII.

WEAVERS from Flanders, as stated in a previous chapter, settled in the district around Manchester in the middle of the sixteenth century. They brought their craft with them and taught the folks of this district how to use the white fibres of the cotton plant in spinning and weaving. They did not bring the cloth trade, that was here already, but they brought in the use of cotton.

These strangers also brought with them their wooden shoes or sabots ; through long use and ages we have adapted them by adding leather tops and modifying the wooden sole, until by the process of growth we have the modern clog.

At the same time " refugees " introduced into England not only textile skill but the cultivation of crops hitherto unknown. They introduced to the English cottage the " kitchen garden," with its carrots and celery, etc.

* * * * * * * * *

The paths or roads at this time went in a more or less direct line from place to place ; pack horses with the panniers on each side went the direct route from the mill to the house, and from the house to the market; over hill and down dale.

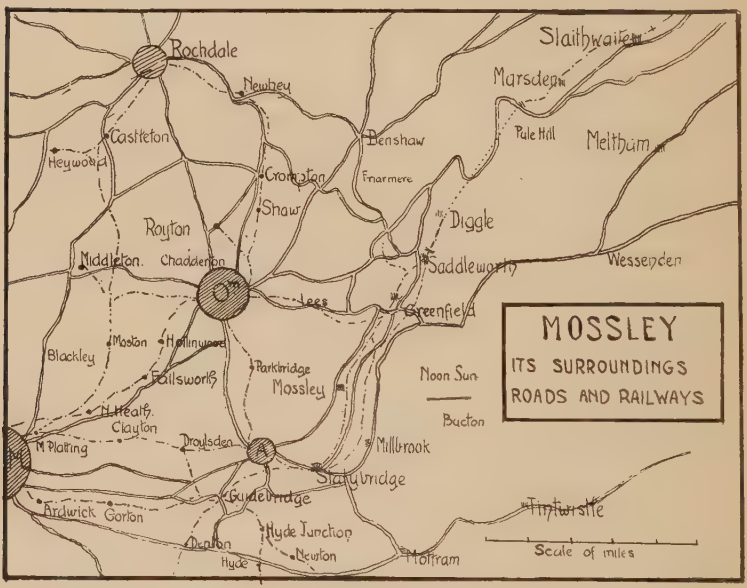
When carts and wagons came into use it paid to go round the hill. The construction of the canal made a great difference to the cost of cotton charges ; by the canal the carriage of goods was 6s. per ton, whilst by the road the cost was 40s. per ton from Liverpool to Manchester in 1772.

* * * * * * * * *

The origin of roads is most interesting. In the very early stages the only tracks that would be seen would be the tracks made by the wild animals as they moved from place to place for feeding, or went down to the river to drink ; when the man wanted water he would naturally follow the same track.

The demand for "salt" and its supply have been prime factors in the evolution of the highway. The little hamlet of Mossley was to all intents and purposes a self-supporting community, but yet salt as a necessity would be required.

The direct path to Manchester and thence to the salt mines of Cheshire would lead to the formation of a main road along which the salt would be transported Owing



to the absence of winter food in sufficient quantity the sheep and pigs were killed and salted for the winter; it was the one commodity which required to be brought from a distance.

In the days of the squire and knight the position of the salt was the dividing line at the dining table; above the salt were the members of the family and the guests, whilst below the salt came the retainers and the servants.

Sir Walter Scott in " Christmas in the Olden Time " mentions the dividing line of the festive board as being absent.

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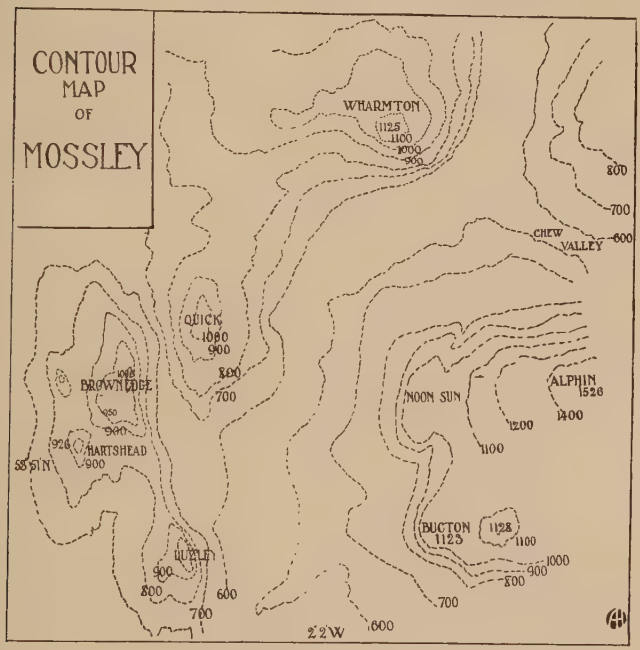
Many of the stone houses of three storeys high are of the oldest in Mossley—in the Market Place, along Wyre Street, around Brookbottom, down Baguley, etc.



In the days before the factory was introduced the attic or top storey was the workshop where the weaver had his loom, and from early morning in the summer time could be heard the clickety-clack of the loom, denoting that the man was at work ; these were the days of the hand-loom weaver. Gradually the old weavers have disappeared, the looms have been dis-

carded and broken up, and the top garret no longer used as a workshop ; very often these attics were approached by a flight of stone steps from the outside.

In my younger days I have a distinct recollection of an old silk weaver who lived down the Back Lane at Failsworth. The loom was in the back kitchen, and as children we used to hang around waiting for the brightly coloured threads of silk waste, which we treasured very highly, especially about May Day.

Cottage industries have disappeared, together with the independent individual worker of the early type of the Lancashire weaver. The spirit of commerce led to the introduction of the factory. From the one loom in a cottage followed the gathering of two or three or more in one building and the adoption of water as the motive power.

One of the earliest mills in the district was the "Clough mill," by the Tumnion Brook, in the valley on the Micklehurst side.

Beginning with the early part of 1800, we find the district taking up cotton spinning as a regular industry. Many mills of a small type were erected at various times.

In an account given by the historian Butterworth, it is stated that the mills in Mossley are—

Scout Mill	1778
Waterton	1823
Valley Mills (Kershaw & Sons)	1823
Brookbottom (Mark Andrew)	1829
Albion (Jerry and Frank Andrew)	1837
John and George Mayall	1831
Carr Hill and Old Roughtown (Nathaniel Buckley & Sons)	1820

Later on in the century the firm of Mayall & Sons became the greatest firm of private spinners in the land.

Following the water power came the new motive power of steam, discovered and harnessed by James Watt ; one of the first mills to be worked by the new power was the mill at Brookbottom.

During this period of erecting mills the town grew in size and population : people would leave the farming occupation and come to the town because of the work to be had in the mills.

The increase in the mills gave rise to a prosperous trade in building ; masons and quarrymen were kept fully occupied. The stone was found close at hand, and the many old quarries in various parts of the town show the extent of the labour in the early 1800 ; the old houses are all built of local stone quarried in the pits. It is to be noticed that all the old houses are roofed with " grey slate," a stone which easily split into slabs about one inch thick. Luzley was the centre for this roofing material.

In the year of the Great Exhibition (1850) Mr. Robert Heys, of Dingle Farm, brought fame to Mossley as a centre of fine woollen weaving ; he wove a piece of flannel cloth for Messrs. George Lawton & Sons, Micklehurst, which won the highest award, a gold medal.

Later on, in the Exhibition of 1862, cloth woven for Messrs. Lawton's by two weavers, Messrs. Jas. Royle and Ben Kershaw, again gained the premier award.

With the mills being fitted up in machinery there would arise opportunities for repairs, etc., and as a consequence there has always been some association with textile machinery. In a directory of the year 1824 are the names of John Hardy, Walter Street, and James Wrigley, as machine makers in Mossley.

An earlier record is on a tombstone in the Parish Churchyard : " Here lies Thomas Brooke, Cardmaker, who died in the year 1772." In Craddock Street there was a shuttle and spindle works in 1832 which employed about 50 men ; it was owned by a family of the name of Pass.

The early history of the cotton trade and mill life is not very pleasing to read ; it was the time of cheap labour, principally the exploitation of the child.

In one of the early Factory Acts it is stated that a child apprentice should work only twelve hours a day,

and that it should do no night work. The children should be taught reading, writing, and arithmetic ; they were to be given one suit per annum ; the factories were to be whitewashed annually, and always to be well ventilated. No mention is made of the children who were not apprentices ; many of these children were from the workhouses, and were kept and fed by the millowner ; they had a life of slavery.

One Lancashire millowner agreed with a London Parish to take one idiot with every 20 sound children supplied. These children were lodged in 'prentice houses near the mills and worked over 13 hours per day. Children often fell asleep on the floor of the mill. In Marple Churchyard there is a stone to the memory of some of these 'prentice children.

In the time of Pitt a Poor Law Bill was passed under which it was possible to set children to work at the age of five !

The millowners made great profits out of their cheap labour. In 1819 another Factory Act was brought forward which forbade the employment of children in the factory who were under nine years of age. In the coal mines the children were employed when they were six years of age, pushing and pulling wagons along the iron lines in the dark tunnels of the pits, or sitting as " trappers " to open and shut the doors in the workings to allow the passage of the wagons. When you think of all this happening in England, in our own district, it is hard to believe ; yet so it was !

Little boys and girls of six and seven years of age were made to get up at five o'clock in the morning all the year round, and to work for twelve hours per day.

You can think of the " good old days " or the " bad old days," whichever you like to apply, and study what a child had to do ; to-day the child is not allowed to work in the mills and factories before the age of fourteen.

CHAPTER IX.

To the old Mossleyite of the 1860 and later period this spot, " Mally Garden End," will be well known.

To the uninitiated it is that portion of Mossley known as Brookbottom to-day—the junction of Lees Road with Stockport Road. Thompson's, the chemists, and Mr. Brookes, the fruiterer, occupy the site at present ; the garden and its wall have gone, the house pulled down, but now, as then, " T' Brook " is a favourite rendezvous of both young and old.

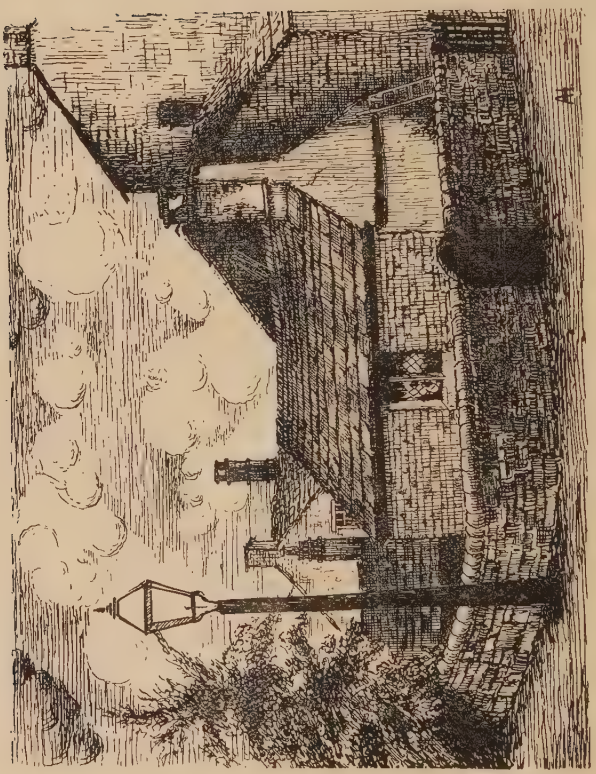
Brookbottom to-day is a busy scene ; it is the starting place for the Oldham 'bus ; also the Stalybridge 'bus *via* Hey Heads ; the picking up for the Ashton 'bus in one direction and the picking up for Haddens in the opposite way.

The best picture of local life in Mossley in the early part of the nineteenth century can be obtained from the diary of Mr. James Kenworthy. It is an account of life by a man who went through it, and experienced the hard times :

" I was born in 1824 in Roughtown, and in my younger days the cotton trade was in its infancy ; the buildings and machinery were very much different from what they are nowadays.

" Nearly all the cotton mills were built by the river-side, and worked by water-power. In many cases an old woollen mill was superseded by a modern cotton mill.

" Most of the cotton mills of my younger days were about eight windows long and four storeys high ; they contained eight pairs of hand mules or ' jinnies,' of from 23 to 26 dozen spindles each. My father worked on such jinnies, and his wage for a full week was between 23s. and 24s. ; the wages were paid fortnightly ; each spinner had a great and little piecer, who were paid 7s. 6d. and 4s. 6d. per week respectively. The hours of labour were from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, and on Saturday until 4 p.m.



MALLY GARDEN END, BROOKBOTTOM, 1860.

" For meal times one and a half hours were allowed.

" In winter time we worked by candle-light.

" The ' after-dillits ' (daylight) were long and dreary and tiresome to the young boys and girls. There were no factory inspectors and young children had to work the full hours ; later, when the Factory Act came in, I was too old to enjoy the benefit, and never went to school, not even half-time.

" Most of the spinners kept a stick or a strap and knew how to rouse up the sleepy or lazy.

" There were, however, some compensating advantages ; both spinners and piecers could go out of the mill for twenty minutes each afternoon, if convenient, and nearly always contrived to do so.

" There were two sets of ' hipping ' (stepping) stones across the river behind the mill, and I have often seen people slip off them and get a wetting.

" There was a footpath on both sides of the river ; these footpaths were much used. There was plenty of brushwood and trees on the banks and plenty of fish in the river.

" When the railway was made through Roughtown nine cottages and a dozen cottage gardens were demolished. In my younger days half the elderly men of Roughtown were employed in the woollen trade as hand-loom weavers. No doubt their wages were small, but their ways of living and dressing were according to their income.

" In fancy I can still see several of the old men getting their evening meal sit out at their doors in the ' fowt ' in summer time. They would have large bowls containing good buttermilk or home-brewed beer with thick oat cake sops stuck edgeway in ; on this they would make a good and hearty meal.

" My wife's father had his share of beer and tobacco at home, and yet he was a hale and hearty man—lived to be eighty years old. In his younger and middle age he followed the trade of a woollen weaver, having a loom and a spinning jenny at home in an ordinary cottage house.

" At this time (1830–1840) quite a number of persons earned a rather precarious living by hand-loom weaving at home. Sometimes there was work and sometimes there was none for weeks together. It was then rather ' hard times.'

" At that time the river was generally deeper than it is now ; a footpath ran along both sides of the river, with the privilege of roaming and rambling along at your pleasure.

" A favourite walk was down by the mill, along the riverside to Winterforth bridge, or the other way by Woodend and the field way back.

" Trout used to sell at 1s. per pound, and ' snigs ' (eels) at 8d. a pound. I can see my father skinning a snig ; then cutting it into lengths about three inches long ; then put in the frying pan with some butter and a lot of fresh-gotten parsley out of the garden ; and they were a treat to us children !

" A good snig out of the river with a black back and a white belly, those were the sort for us ! They were much better than the yellow-tinged ones, which were caught in the canal.

" There was then a heavy traffic with boats on the canal.

" Whether the seasons are altered or no, I cannot say ; sometimes I think the summers are not so warm, nor the winters so long and cold.

" Formerly I have known both the river and the canal thickly covered with ice for weeks together, scores of people skating and sliding on both river and canal. I am inclined to think we have a change in the climate.

" There were no ' Bobbies ' in those days to interfere with every little pastime.

" In the winter they would put three or four more horses to the iron boat to ' crash ' through the ice.

" With the ' Fly Boats ' (Pickford's or Kenworthy's), which ran night and day between London and Huddersfield, there would be five men and a boy, known as a ' nipper.' It was God help the poor boys, for they were often badly used.

" It should be borne in mind that there were no railroads around here then ; that the canal was of great importance in the way of traffic, and that it was a serious thing for it to be stopped.

" The last kingfisher bird which I have seen was at the north end of the canal tunnel near Marple Aqueduct.

" In my father's younger days flour sold at 6s. per dozen pounds, and very bad at that price !

" I can remember long before the accursed Corn Laws were repealed, and when there was not much foreign corn imported into this country, that if it happened to be a bad harvest that both flour and meal were very bad and dear. I have known when we came home from the mill at eight o'clock at night, tired and weary, when we opened our cottage door, that we could smell the porridge, the meal being bad.

" It was no unusual thing in those days for families to have a large brown dish full of porridge sent to the mill for their breakfast. The great bulk of the labouring classes are now a great deal better fed, better clothed, and have a great deal better houses to live in than what they had formerly. A many of the houses then consisted of a living place and one chamber upstairs ; sometimes a kitchen or out-place besides.

" Often in these houses large families, young and old, would live for years, and all slept in the one bedroom. These things ought not to have been, but they were so !

" It was neither conducive to good health, morality nor comfort. There was no gas or water in the houses ; common tallow candles were used for lights, and water was fetched in cans from the wells and ' spouts.'

" Sanitary arrangements were of the roughest ; there was an ' essmidden ' nearby each house for the refuse.

" Nearly every cottage in Roughtown had a coal cote, hen cote, or pig cote, or all three of them.

" These cotes would now be considered rather rude affairs ; they were rudely built of rough wall stones, got anywhere ; mostly timbered with fir trees stolen out of the plantation near by—Solomon Wood—which they looked upon mostly as their own ; they were slated with

slate stones got in the neighbourhood. The walls and roof were stuffed with dry moss got off the moors, which kept the cotes warm and comfortable for the living inmates.

" The ' Little Wood ' was the drying and bleaching place for the cottage washing.

" ' Top o' Roughtown Spout ' came from the overflow of the Wood well. Close by here was where in my young days the ' Roughtown Rush Cart ' used to be built on Mossley Wakes Monday, and in fact on the Sunday too ; for a number of years, at the end, it was built at the left-hand side of the road in Wood Brow.

" There were many gardens in and around Roughtown, and good gardens, too, in those days, but they are nearly wholly gone now. Times are changed ; circumstances are changed ; climate is changed ; and, I may say, people are changed.

" My father and others at one time kept quite a number of bees in their gardens. Honey and beeswax were articles of commerce amongst them. From climate and other changes it got that the bees were not able to keep themselves alive through the winter, hence they gradually died out. I think that bees not being able to live in the neighbourhood is a clear sign of a great change in the climate.

" Formerly once and again they used to what was called ' Walk the boundaries.' I have not heard of it being done for many a long year past ; in my young days I have seen it done.

" There were plenty of small-farmer woollen weavers ; they earned or received but very little money ; there was not much in circulation in those days. There would be generally one or two pairs of woollen looms in the chamber on which they would work when there was work to be got. People did not live so much on money as they fancy they do now.

" A many of them got up in the morning when they could see to dress themselves. If they heard the huntsman blowing his horn to collect or gather the hounds for the day's hunting, which was then often before daylight

in the morning, they would turn out early and follow the hounds all the day for pure love of the sport.

" A small plot of land in some portion of their small farm was set aside for growing—for their own use—potatoes, cabbage, turnips, carrots, onions and herbs ; some had apple, pear, cherry, gooseberry, currants, etc.

" The land and the house were their own, so that there was no rent to pay ; a cow supplied them with butter and milk ; a pig with bacon and lard ; oats were often grown on their own land which supplied them with oatcakes and porridge ; so that they lived almost entirely off their own land.

" There was very little tea and sugar used among them—mint balm or ground ivy was the tea then, a little coffee maybe ; as a special treat occasionally tea was had.

" The moors and common land were free to everyone. To-day it is now parcelled out among a select number of sporting gentlemen, guarded by gamekeepers ; it is now almost high treason for a poor man to set foot upon its sacred soil.

" ' Wimberrys ' grew plentifully on these upland wilds ; they were good fruit, much better than the most we buy now at the shop. Sixpence a quart was the usual price. There was no ' school board ' in those days or ' Bobbys ' either ; when the season was on and the weather fit, we scoured the moors for wimberry.

" Whilst speaking of the moors, the people used to get ' turfs,' or ' flights ' for fuel, fern or bracken for bedding, heather for besoms and for fire kindling.

" Around Roughtown the trees were known as ' The Plantation,' ' Nield Wood,' and ' Little Wood.' (To-day the names exist but no wood.) By far the greater part of the trees were dark pine trees ; some few light green spruce firs, which often bore a goodly number of fir cones, or fir crabs, as we used to call them. There was also fair of oaks and a few birches.

" W. Winterbottom—otherwise ' Owd Bill o' Patts '—a cantankerous old character, was supposed to look

VIEW ON RIVER TAME. (Photo by Mrs. E. Leather.

after the ' Plantation ' ; portions were sold to the makers of the ' Turnpike Road ' and also to the railway company.

" The plantation was a favourite place for young boys It was nearly always warm and cosy therein, however boisterous and cold it might be outside ; the wind could not get through the dense mass of firs. Threepence or sixpence a fortnight was the usual ' spending brass ' ; if a lad had a shilling a fortnight he was classed as a ' swell.' Wages were paid fortnightly—on Saturday evenings after the mills stopped at four o'clock ; it was often the case after the spinners had drawn their wages in the factory warehouse that they would adjourn to some alehouse to get change to pay their piecers, who would hang around the alehouse door waiting for their wages. In some cases cotton masters, or a relative or friend, kept a grocer's shop, farm or alehouse. Here the workpeople were expected to do their trading ; they had ' strap ' or credit. The greater number of work-people ' bought in ' or traded on credit ; they had ' shop books,' and paid their shop scores, or portions of them, fortnightly.

" In the thick brushwood of ' Nield's Wood ' ' mopes ' or bullfinches used to build their nests—and my Uncle Will has reared many a brood of them in the window at the end of his jenny-gate at the Roughtown Mill ; my Uncle James was pretty clever teaching young mopes to whistle tunes ; ' Copenhagen ' was a favourite tune."

* * * * * *

" This village has spread itself in the course of fifty or sixty years over a considerable part of the hamlet. That portion lying below the chapel (church) towards the margin of the river Tame and the Scout and Scout Mill estate are in the best state of cultivation. According to the last census taken in 1821, the number of males was 575, females 637—making a total of 1,212.

" The woollen manufacture was the original trade of this place, and is still carried on to a considerable extent in the neighbourhood, yet the cotton manufacture is

[*Photo by Mrs. E. Leighton.*

CHEW BROOK WATERFALL.

now become the principal employment of the inhabitants."—(Butterworth).

The River Tame.

Our river, upon which Mossley stands, has been called by one writer " The parent of the Mersey."

" Its waters and the benefit derived from their use as a means of motive power played a very important part in the birth and early days of the woollen and cotton industries of this district. The river Tame rises in the range of hills to the north of Saddleworth, and as we know it at Stalybridge, is the joint flood of many mountain brooks and streams. The principal of these are the Chew and the Diggle, which join the Tame and lose their names at the same time ; these two latter have their own sources in the hills, north and south-east of Saddleworth, their waters being really the output of the springs, the morasses and the bogs of Featherbed Moss, Doveston Moss and Holme Moss. These extensive moorland tracts, solemn and grand, in their undisturbed solitude, are almost without human inhabitants. Tenanted chiefly by wild game and wildfowl, they are seldom disturbed by the presence of mankind, save during the shooting season, or by the visit of some botanical devotee. It has been calculated that the watershed receives the drainage from an area of fifty square miles.

" The waters of Carrbrook and Swineshaw join in on the Cheshire side, whilst the streams of Staley also help to swell the volume. River Tame was for a time the boundary of the Saxon Heptarchial kingdoms of Northumbria and Mercia. Tame, Chew and Diggle are all Saxon names.

" In times past the Tame was subject to sudden floods which caused great damage to property on its banks. The subsequent establishment of extensive reservoirs and waterworks has done much to check the rush of water from the steep hillsides.

" The vale of the Tame must have been at one time a veritable Paradise, and even to-day, in spite of the ravages of the necessary smoke and grime of our

VIEW ON RIVER TAME. [*Photo by Mrs. E. Leighton.*

factories, many choice vistas of river scenery can be seen by those who care for such pleasures.

" In the higher reaches of the tributary streams the scenery is grand and exceedingly impressive, solemn and sublime in its weirdness. The mountaineering visitor may find within a radius of a few miles the undisturbed wilds which were the homes and haunts of men in pre-historic times.

" The course of the Tame is of a very winding nature, although in some places means have been used to straighten it. Flowing through scenes of varied associations, after leaving Yorkshire, it forms the dividing line between Lancashire and Cheshire. Although the distance from Stockport, where it falls into the Mersey, to its source in the Yorkshire moors would not be much more than twelve miles as the crow flies, yet in consequence of the windings and turnings its real length approaches forty miles."

" Bare and cold as the out-cropping strata may appear to the bustling passer-by of to-day, dark and turbid as the waters of the Tame may be, the strong faces of the rock and the inartistic bed of the rock are still interesting to the geologist. The slopes and plateaux of the Pennine Range have long been the hunting ground of devout and practical archæologists. Their labours have been rewarded by the discovery of ancient relics and proofs of the occupation of man at a remote period.

" Antiquities of stone and flint are ample proofs of man's existence hereabouts when the hilltops were the haunts of wild beasts, the hunting and slaying of which furnished the ancient Brigantine with food and garments."

" The ' grit ' stone of which the hills mainly consist is not favourable for the preservation of animal remains, yet under the peat of the moors may be preserved many relics of remote periods."

" Near Shire Clough, Carrbrook, there are large blocks of stone which appear to have been shaped and placed in their present position by the hand of man."

In an old document in the archives of York is stated : " The valley (Tame) was an impassable forest from the head of Saddleworth to the neighbourhood of Stockport."

The Coach leaving "The Bull" one hundred years ago.

CHAPTER X.

Early 1800.

THE "Bull's Head" was the centre of the town's activities in the early part of the nineteenth century; the postman delivered the letters there every morning from Manchester, and took away those for other places. When the American War was being fought in 1862–3 the mills had to close down; the supplies of cotton were cut off, and the workers in the cotton districts suffered very much. If you are interested, there are some books in the local Store Library which give accounts of the Lancashire people during "The Panic."

Anyone wishing to hear the latest news during this war gathered at "The Bull" in the forenoon, and the landlord read the news for the benefit of all. Newspapers were not so common as they are to-day, and only certain persons got them regularly.

To-day the inn is gone as the centre of gossip and hospitality for the traveller, but the building remains; this public-house was the group of buildings at the top of Stamford Street, between the archway and the smithy. Near the smithy end there was a mounting block; this was a set of three steps, varying heights, for the purpose of assisting gentlemen to mount their horses when journeying forward after resting.

This inn was the stopping-place for the stage coach which ran through Mossley on its journey to and from Huddersfield. "The Celerity" stage coach from Huddersfield called at "The Bull" every Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday evenings at six o'clock on its way to Manchester. On the return journey the coach called every Tuesday at eight o'clock, and other mornings at ten o'clock. Up the archway were formerly the stables for the post horses and coach horses.

One can imagine "The Bull" being a very busy place in the hours when the coach called to pick up or set down passengers.

TWO VIEWS OF
TOLL BAR HOUSE,
MANCHESTER ROAD,
MOSSLEY.

[*Photos by Mrs. E. Leighton.*

Another coach ran through Lower Mossley and called at the Commercial ; here again can be seen the archway which led to the stables. When you look at the surrounding buildings you must remember that the railway was not then made ; it was made some time afterwards in 1849.

The fare on the coach from Manchester to Leeds was 12s. inside and 8s. 6d. outside.

When the roads were made at first, " toll bars " were fixed at different positions ; this bar was a gate which reached all across the road ; anyone wanting to pass through had to pay a small tax or toll, which went to pay the cost of the upkeep of the road. There was a person on duty to open and close the gate and collect the toll.

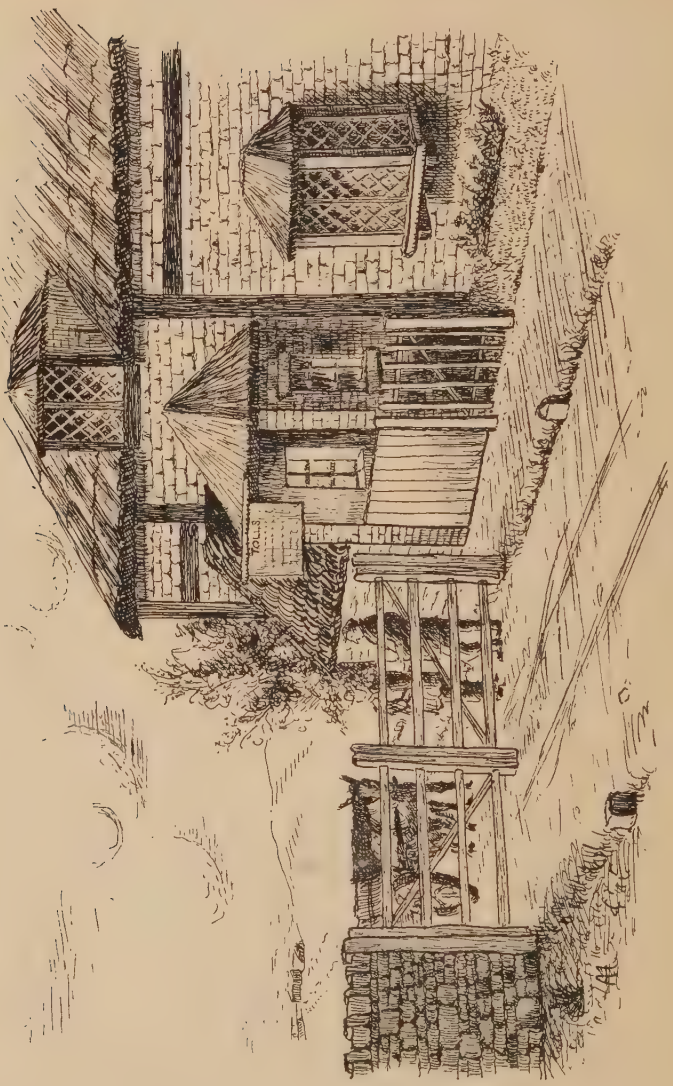
There are two of these houses in Mossley to-day ; on Manchester Road there is the " Toll Bar House," near Wood End, easily distinguishable by its peculiar shape ; the other is at the tram terminus at Roaches.

There are places in existence to-day where tolls are still paid. In North Wales, if you wish to cross over into Anglesey by the Menai Suspension Bridge, a small charge is made ; these charges help to maintain the bridge in a proper state of repair.

On the main roads around us the tolls were abolished when the roads came under the care and control of the County Council.

" The old roads left by the Romans remained the principal arteries of traffic until the reign of Queen Anne. Little was done in the shape of repair except when the King and his retinue passed through the district. Upon such occasions the route taken would be put in order, the ruts levelled and the brushwood and timber cleared ; the ancient fords and bridges would be made passable, thus obtaining for the roads receiving attention the title of " The King's Highway."

About the year 1700 attempts were made to improve the roads, but it was not until the end of the century that Parliament tackled the question.



AN OLD ENGLISH TOLL BAR.

Subsequently Acts were passed by the Government for the making of new roads and the diverting and mending of old ones. District trusts were formed with powers to erect gates and barriers to take toll from persons using such roads ; this was the inauguration of the " turnpike roads."

Highway Acts came into operation authorising parishes to appoint surveyors, whose duties included the supervision and construction of the roads, and the collection in their respective districts of the rates and taxes.

The improvement of the roads enabled the pack saddle and pillion to be discarded and the stage coach, with its postillion, guard and driver appeared.

The chronological table at the end of the book will give you the dates of the making of our principal roads.

The Chartists.

In the early part of the nineteenth century the working classes were very often on the border line of starvation ; this was caused in some part by the " Corn Laws." To keep up the price of corn there was heavy taxation on imported corn; this made flour very dear. In Mr. Kenworthy's diary he mentions the bad flour and meal which formed the principal food for the poorer classes. The cost of flour was 6s. per dozen pounds.

In the local city of Manchester there was the " Peterloo Massacre," which had its origin in the struggle for the " Repeal of the Corn Laws." Closely connected with this is the movement of the ordinary man in the demand for the " People's Charter."

The men who represented the workers in the Parliament were not exactly fair to the worker, and so he became very much dissatisfied. Meetings were held in many parts of the country, especially in the manufacturing districts, which were becoming more populous, in con-

sequence of the people flocking to the mills, where better wages could be obtained than in the agricultural areas.

Elections were not fairly carried out ; voting was open and not as it is to-day, when no one needs to know how a man has voted. On many occasions a man was " victimised " for having dared to exercise his privilege of voting.

The Charter put forward the demands for " Universal Suffrage, Vote by Ballot, Annual Parliaments, Payment of Members, Equal Electoral Districts, and Abolition of Property Qualifications."

The old Baguley School was the meeting-place of the Mossley agitators, who worked in conjunction with the Ashton section.

The parties agreed to some kind of armed resistance, and a general rising should have taken place on August 14th, 1848.

A number of Mossley men marched to Ashton and met their confederates. A struggle with the police took place, and unfortunately one of the policemen was killed. The rulers responsible then called out the military force and the Chartists quickly disappeared and made their way to home. Later, about a month afterwards, eight Mossley men were arrested for their share in the disturbance.

On Thursday, December 21st, 1848, these men were tried at York Assizes, and six of them were sentenced to a month's imprisonment.

A weaver, Joseph Chapman, of Micklehurst, wrote several poems to encourage and inspire his comrades in the struggle. The following four verses are a sample :—

THE CHARTER.

Ye sons of Britain, ne'er be slaves,
Nor shrink from liberty,
To moulder in dishonest graves,
And sink in poverty.

But take the pill with right goodwill
And purge through every quarter,
When England's isle once more shall smile,
When ruled by the Charter.

God ne'er ordained a man to dwell
In care and misery;
While knaves and haughty tyrants swell
In pomp and luxury.

Now take the knaves and dig their graves,
In every grave a quarter;
Who would deny that lawful right,
That right's the honest Charter.

Whatever may be our political views, we have to thank these men for some of the freedom and privileges which the British nation enjoys to-day.

CHAPTER XI.

"Pace-Eggin'."

The children and youths of to-day know very little of how the children of a former generation spent their youth and what games and forms of enjoyment were common.

When lads of some years back wanted to get "spending money" for Eastertime they banded together and formed a company to visit the surrounding houses of their district as "Pace-eggers."

There was a little dialogue published, the full title of which read thus :—

THE PEACE EGG;

OR,

ST. GEORGE'S ANNUAL PLAY

FOR THE

AMUSEMENT OF YOUTH.

When each lad could say his part, then came the preparation of the costumes. These were brilliant in colour—glazed calico shirts of red, green and blue; a tin sword for St. George, specially made by Roylance, a tall hat for the Doctor and a black bag; some discarded hats of sisters with huge feathers completed the array.

Now I will take you back some forty or fifty years.

"Owd Job o't Quarries kitchen, in't cottage deawn't fowt;" the dying hour between the dark and the daylight; the glimmering firelight showing the sanded floor, and the silvery glint of burnished steel around the fireplace, and the splash of copper-red from the kettle; in the background "on't top o't chest" of drawers a case of stuffed birds, showing in the glass the quivering reflection of the fire-flames; "baggin' just o'er" and "Owd Joe" is having a few minutes of silent comradeship with his pipe.

In the street a gradually-nearing, sound-increasing clatter of clogs accompanied by the sound of joyful voices ; a shuffling of feet round the doorstep ; a sudden hush of chattering noises ; then a very timid knock.

On opening the door, a voice in a half request and supplication says, " We'n com' a Pay-seggin' ? "

Owd Job's Cottage—" Pace-Eggin'."

The old man bids them welcome and enter, and in troop in disorder a marvellous company of characters.

Every child has that " serious " seriousness peculiar to the young ; there is no mockery about the performance.

St. George opens the proceedings :—

" I am St. George, who from Old England sprung ;
My famous name throughout the world hath rung.
* * * * * * *
I've searched the world all round and round,
But a man to equal me I never found."

His immediate opponent is the Slasher :—

" I am a valiant soldier, and Slasher is my name,
With my sword and buckle by my side,
I hope to win the game."

A fight takes place between the two, and Slasher is wounded.

Another character comes in and shouts for a doctor, who enters.

Fool : " What diseases can you cure ? "
Doctor : " All sorts."
Fool : " What's all sorts ? "
Doctor : " The itch, the pitch, the palsy and the gout,
If a man gets nineteen devils in his skull,
I'll cast twenty of them out.
* * * * *
Here, Jack, take a little out of my bottle,
And let it run down thy throttle ;
If thou be not quite slain,
Rise, Jack, and fight again."

Another character enters :—

" I am the Black Prince of Paradine, born of high renown,
Soon I will fetch St. George's lofty courage down."
* * * * * * *

Another fight occurs and the Prince is slain. In comes the King of Egypt, who appeals to the hero of many fights, Hector.

" I am a valiant knight,
And Hector is my name ;
Many bloody battles have I fought,
And always won the same,
But from St. George I received this bloody wound."
* * * * * * *

The play proceeds ; the duel to the death ; the marvellous recovery ; the triumph of right ; the confusion of wrong ; are all acted in true orthodox fashion,

according to the tradition handed down from time immemorial ; the tin sword comes down with a thwack and the villain is discomfited.

Finally in enters the last character—least but most important ;—

> " Here come I, Little Devil Doubt,
> If you don't give me money,
> I'll sweep you all out,
> Money I want, and money I crave ;
> If you don't give me money
> I'll send you all to the grave."

After the epilogue, the slain arises, and like a dog leaving the water, shakes himself clear of the sand off the kitchen floor. The Devil collects his " dues," and out troop the lads to their next house of call, to recite again the adventures of the noble knight to as interested and pleased audiences.

To make for variety some other " gang " of " tax-gatherers " would recite a dialogue based on " Bold Robin Hood and his Body of Men." They were equipped with the recognised bows and arrows.

At the end of the holiday the money received would be divided between the performers.

" The annual festival of the ' Rush-bearing ' was until late years celebrated in Mossley, but the custom has died out to-day. This festival, partaking of a village wake, is of high antiquity. Pope Gregory IV. gave orders that ' they build themselves huts of the boughs of trees and celebrate the solemnities with religious feastings.' "

" A kind of obtuse pyramid of rushes, erected on a cart, is highly ornamented in front, and surmounted by a splendid garland. To the vehicle so laden a number of young men, from thirty to forty, wearing white jackets and ornamented with silver articles, ribands and flowers were harnessed in pairs.

" A band of music was always in attendance, which struck up on the cart moving on, and thousands of spectators, attracted from a distance of several miles around, hailed with repeated cheers the showy pageant.

THE OLD-TIME "RUSH-CART."

"The procession passed through the town and, on arriving in front of each of the inns a kind of morris dance was performed by the men in harness, who jingled copper bells, and beat, or rather stamped, time with their wooden shoes, the clown, who was dressed in fancy attire, all the while collecting money to refresh the actors in the grotesque exhibition. From the town the procession passed to the neighbouring mansions, where the dance was in later times repeated, and where the performers were presented by the ladies with garlands and money. Till about the early part of the nineteenth century (1800) the rush-bearing usually terminated at the church, and the rushes were spread on the clay floor under the benches used as seats by the congregation, to serve as a winter carpet, while the garlands were hung up in the chancel and over the pews of the families by whom they had been presented. Here they remained till their beauty had faded ; but in later times the church was generally the last place thought of in this festival, which degenerated into mere rustic saturnalia."—(Baines).

* * * * * * * * *

In the diary of Mr. James Kenworthy is mentioned the building of a "rush-cart." Years ago each little hamlet had its own special cart for the occasion, and great rivalry was often displayed between the rival supporters.

The time for the rush-cart was the Wakes Monday and Tuesday. The gathering of the rushes was the work of the enthusiasts, in which all could join, but the building of the rushes into a mass in the cart called for special skill, and several men were well known as "artists" in this line.

When finished it was a solid mass of rushes built in the form of an inverted V ; the front of the rushes was covered with a clean cloth, with a border ; upon this cloth were displayed various articles such as medals, hunting horns, pewters, etc., as a decoration, whilst

upon the back was displayed some motto as " It's pluck that does it."

During the weeks previous the dancers would undergo tuition from the expert, who acted as the master of the ceremonies in the many intricate movements of the dance ; the music was supplied by fifes and drums.

The dress was special for the day, and consisted of a white shirt, with velvet knee-breeches, white stockings and well-polished clogs with brass nail embellishments ; the headgear was either a straw hat or a " jockey cap " ; small jingling bells were fastened with a bunch of coloured ribbons to the side of the breeches at the knees ; in the hand was carried a small stick, or a bunch of cord twisted and decorated.

The cart was drawn through the streets by means of two ropes and stangs or " waigs " about six to eight feet apart, with two men to each stang ; seated upon the top of the erection was some local celebrity. In command of all was " The Whip-cracker."

The public-houses generally brewed a special ale for the occasion ; people who had left their native village returned for old associations to be renewed ; those who lived in the village saw to it that the larder was filled with a good supply of meat and drink. " Wakes beef " was expected to be of the very finest quality, and open house was the rule ; if you did not partake of the " cake and ale " of the goodwife you gave great offence.

It is on record in the Saddleworth district that a " big fight " took place between the rival hamlets of Uppermill and Delph and Dobcross on one of their annual " rush-bearings." Mr. Ammon Wrigley gives an account in one of his books.

To-day the holiday is celebrated by leaving the town and its " wakes " behind, and finding fresh fields and pastures new—and rush-carts are no more.

* * * * * * * * *

Rushes were used on many occasions by the people. From an old manuscript this extract is copied : " That two tapers of one lb. of wax, and a garland of roses, to be

sette upon Seynt John's hed, and that the chaple be strewed with green rushes on St. John's Day, which is the height of summer."

Another old custom was strewing rushes on the occasion of marriage from the bride's door to that of the church.

> "All hail to Hymen and his marriage day,
> Strew rushes and quickly come away;
> Strew rushes, maides; and ever as you strew,
> Think one day, maides, like will be done for you."
> —*Flowers and Flower Lore.*

The only means of artificial light in winter for the poorer classes was the "rush-light."

Rushes were gathered from moist pastures and the sides of streams, when they were in the best of condition in the height of summer. It was the work of the old men, women and children to gather the thickest and the longest, which were taken home and immediately put into water to prevent drying and shrinking.

The next day or two would be occupied in peeling the rind from top to bottom of the rush, leaving one narrow, even rib of rind all the length to support the pith; they were then dipped into scalding fat or grease, which required some little skill.

The careful wife obtained her fat for nothing, because she "saved the scummings of her bacon-pot"; beeswax was sometimes added to strengthen and improve the light.

Gilbert White says: "A good rush, which measured in length two feet four inches and a half, being minuted, burnt only three minutes short of an hour. An experienced old housekeeper assures me that a pound and a half of rushes completely supplies his family the year round."

This was in the time when candles would be dear, and the labourers had to make shift with what they could produce on their own.

CHAPTER XII.

The Church.

"THE Established Chapel of Mossley was built in 1755, and enlarged in 1786. Joseph Pickford, Esq., of Alt Hill, gave the land, and the Earl of Stamford gave the timber requisite for building and fitting up the same."

The following extract is interesting, because it is the probable origination of Mossley Parish Church, St. George's :—

"Returned into Chancery, dated 18th of June, 1650, and remaining in the Rolles Chapel.

"We further p'sent, that Alt Edge, within the said P'ishe of Ashton, is distant from the P'ishe Church of Ashton about three myles and a halfe, and three myles from the P'ishe Church of Ouldham, and not so neare any other Church or Chapell, in which place we think fitt that a P'ishe Church should be built, and that all within the Boundaries following should be appropriated to the new p'tended Church, viz. to begin at the Devycon where Lancashire, Yorkshire and Cheshire meet in Mossley Hamlett, and following the little Brooke which divides Lancashire and Yorkshire, till it come to the P'ishe of Ouldham, which is at a place called Water-gate Milne, then down the Diviyon betwixt Ouldham P'ishe and Ashton P'ishe to the Parke, thence to Aly Hill, thence to Lilly Lanes, thence to Knott Hill, thence to Othe upon Lisley, thence down to Barnard Wilds to the water, including Mossley, thence up the River to the Meetinge of the three shires afforesaid."

This is the petition that was sent up in the time of the Commonwealth for a new church to save the parishioners in the out-lying districts of Ashton-under-Lyne from long journeys to the Parish Church.

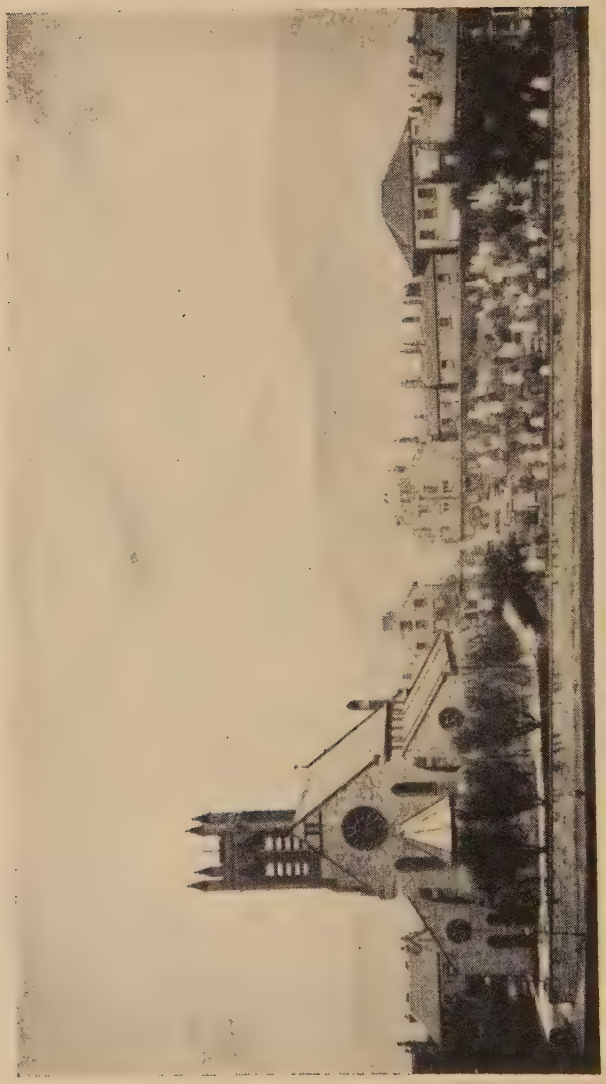
An interesting extract from 1547, an injunction to the clergy: "That every holiday when there was no sermon the clergy should . . . . recite to their parish-

ioners in the pulpit the Pater Noster, the Credo, and the Ten Commandments IN ENGLISH to the intent the people may learn the same by heart."

Evidently on holiday occasions services were held in church and the people attended; in those days the services were said by the parson in Latin, but on these special days the parson had his definite orders as to what should be done.

THE OLD CHURCH—1755.

Following that petition, there seems to have been no action taken for a period of about one hundred years; then in 1775 a definite proposal was made for a new chapel-of-ease. Hartshead was at that time a more important place than Mossley, and sites were put forward in both places.



ST. GEORGE'S CHURCH, MOSSLEY, 1926. [*Photo by Ben Lees, Esq.*

Finally it was decided to build the church on a plot of land known as The Higher Croft, at Mossley.

The church was erected at a cost of £600 ; to that cost Ashton contributed £238, Saddleworth £215, and Staley Wood £146.

The building contractors were James Mills, of Hartshead, and Mathew Slater, of Dukinfield.

The only contract let to a Mossley man was for the pulpit ; this was made by Edward Hardy at a cost of 18 guineas.

The first trustees as put down in the records were :—

James Brown, of Ashton-under-Lyne.
Peter Greaves, of Mossley.
Thomas Seel, of Mossley.
William Kenworthy, the younger, of Quickwood.
Edward Kenworthy, of Saddleworth.
Robert Lees, of Staley Hall.
Daniel Woolley, of Staley Wood.

Early in 1757, on the completion of the old chapel, the principal residents of the district forwarded a petition to the Bishop of Chester, praying that the chapel might be consecrated for public worship, and the chapel yard for the burial of the dead, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England.

" The humble petition of the Revd. John Penny, Clerk, Rector of Ashton-under-Lyne ; James Brown, the younger, of Ashton-under-Lyne, Woollen Draper ; and William Kenworthy, of Quick Wood, in the Chapelry of Saddleworth, and of the principal inhabitants of the Hamlet of Mossley, and other neighbouring inhabitants of the Chapelry of Saddleworth, and of the Parish of Mottram-in-Longdendale."

At the foot of the petition are inscribed the names of twenty-two of the chief persons who had contributed to the fund for erecting the chapel.

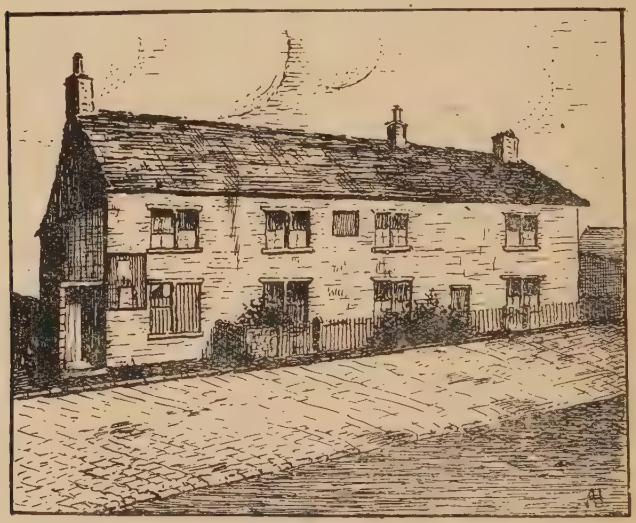
The Bishop of Chester at once complied with the request, and in June, 1757, the ceremony of consecration was performed by the Bishop in the presence of a large number of local clergy and a numerous congregation.

The first baptism was on August 8, 1756.

The first burial was on September 24, 1761.

The first marriage was nearly one hundred years later, being on February 21, 1859.

When new chapels (churches) were built pews and seats were allotted to those who had shared in the work of erection. Thus, Edward Hardy, joiner, of Mossley, for his labours in the building, was allowed to choose and enjoy one four-seated pew in Lees Chapel (St. John's,



The Old School.

Hey). It was afterwards described as "the pew or desk, number 38, on the north side of the said chapel, to wit, that pew betwixt Widow Wareing's, of Waterhead Mill, and Isaac Lees', of Robucklo, fustian weaver, being the ninth pew from the north door on the right hand as you goe towards the east, and sixth from the clerk's desk."

In 1755 the building of St. George's Chapel, Mossley, was begun, and the pulpit and font cover were supplied

by Edward Hardy. In the same year he disposed of his pew at Lees for £6 unto Jonathan Booth.

In the old records of the Parish Church (Rev. C. H. Bagott, M.A.) can be found several references to the Whitsuntide processions, which to-day will be thought rather peculiar.

" May 16, 1824. Resolved that there be provided for every scholar a glass of cordial or wine, and a biscuit.

" May 1, 1825. Resolved that there be a spice cake and a glass of ale provided for each scholar."

In the accounts are found payments for the same.

" Paid John Buckley, Bull's Head, for liquor, etc., £1 8s. 2d.

" Paid Mr. Ed. Greaves, for malt and cakes, £1 17s. 7d."

The Old School.

The building in the sketch opposite was known as " The Old School." It used to stand near the iron railings on the market ground of the present day. It was not a building of any size or architectural beauty, but its associations with the schooldays of many of the older inhabitants made the building to have a personal interest. All that remains to-day of the school building is the tablet, which is in the south-east corner of the present Parish Church School. The inscription on the tablet says : " This school was built by public subscription in the year of our Lord 1785 and enlarged in 1823 by public subscription, aided by a donation from the Earl of Stamford and Warrington. Repaired in 1868 from a legacy left by the late Edmund Buckley, Esq., M.P.

" These stones from the Old School were presented by T. and J. Cope."

Previous to the Parish School being built, it served as a Sunday School ; it was well known in 1860 as " Brierley's School," and in 1900 there were many men living who could relate stories of their old schooldays.

After 1870 the building had various uses, and served different communities as a club, a workshop, a Gospel mission room, and finally as the " Shepherds' " club.

In 1906 the place was pulled down by order of the Town Council, as it had become unsightly, owing to age and neglect.

Following the Old School came the building of the Parish School of St. George's. The schools were erected in 1842 on land given by the Earl of Stamford and Warrington, on the one condition that the children should be educated in the schools in the principles of the Church of England.

Wood Hall.

Though little is now left of this old hall in Roughtown, there is plenty of evidence of its antiquity and beauty.

In the fifteenth century the names of Gilbert de Quick and Roger de Quick appear in the documents attached to Saddleworth Church. This hall was probably their manorial residence.

The church register of 1700 shows that a family of the name of Kenworthy occupied the Hall. One member of this family, Anne Kenworthy, is mentioned on a gravestone in St. George's Churchyard ; another is mentioned on a tablet in the same church.

Anne married an actor called Samuel W. Riley ; they were married at Gretna Green, probably Mossley's only link with that romantic spot and its runaway weddings.

In 1790 the hall was in good repair and was a fine specimen of a country mansion. The traces of the terrace and balustrading, the cornices, and of its Elizabethan style can still be seen. The school was not then in existence ; all the land around formed the garden ; the drive to the Hall came round by the small house on the right side going down ; this was the coach-house. In the cottages portions of stonework different from ordinary masonry can be seen.

Mechanics' Institution.

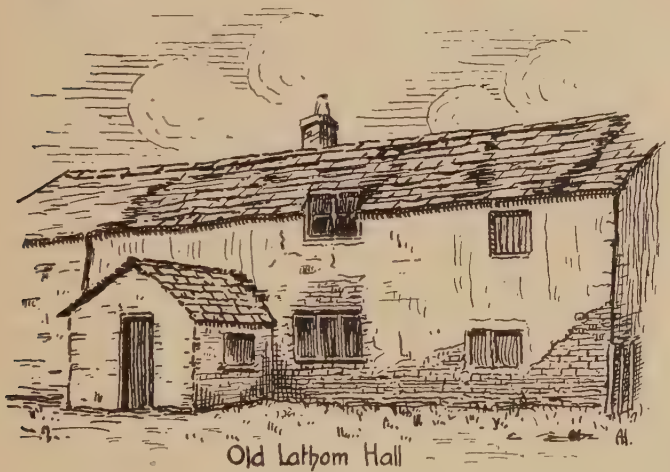
This building in Stamford Road, now known as The Technical School, has played a great part in the later history of the Borough.

The Institution was first established in the old garret over the "Old House at Home," in the year 1839–40.

In 1857 the members decided to build, and appealed to the public to help; the record says that practically everybody in the town gave a subscription towards the building fund.

The building was erected at a cost of £1,900.

As an institution for the education of the people and public benefit to the town the Institution has justified



Old Lathom Hall

its erection. Many men who have gone out into the world and made names for themselves received their training and education in this building.

To-day the place is used by the Local Education Committee as a centre for cookery and manual instruction in woodwork, and for evening classes.

Lathom Hall formerly stood in the fields on the left of Ashton Road, near Lee Lane. This hall was the residence of the ancestors of the Heginbothams of Ashton, who had at that time a mill, long since disappeared, which stood in Tun Bottom, near the stream which runs into the by-pass along the reservoir side.

MOSSLEY'S WAR MEMORIAL.
Erected on behalf of the Town by Alderman J. A. Bottomley, J.P., and Mrs. Bottomley.

CHAPTER XIII.

Mossley of To-day.

Mossley, with its natural surroundings of hills, without a doubt has a beauty of its own, and a stranger notices this immediately ; but " familiarity breeds contempt," and homely views are not appreciated as they might be.

Looking towards Greenfield valley, the view from the top of Quick, or " Wick," as more commonly spoken by the native, with the rugged backing of " Pots and Pans," the great expanse of valley and hillside slopes will stand comparison with the famous views of other districts ; again, from the top of " Light Birches," the valley, looking towards Stalybridge, with the curving, rounded mounds of the Brushes hills, backed up with " the distance looking blue " of the Derbyshire ranges, is another panoramic picture ; these two are subjects for great " canvases," full of atmosphere and distance.

Of smaller, daintier spots there are plenty, constantly changing according to the season—at one time " the misty blue " of the bluebell or the delicate green of " the question mark " of the young fronds of bracken ; at another the golden yellow of the buttercup, followed in the autumn with the rich browns and bronzes of the fading bracken ; but to the Nature lover, at each and every season, always worth attention.

Unfortunately, in our district, trees with their foliage grow less and less in number each year ; smoke, commercialism and thoughtless acts of vandalism have all combined and played havoc with what was once a large natural forest.

Little now remains of the one-time huge forest which covered the surrounding hill slopes. " The Big Wood," on the Micklehurst side, is our sole remaining tract of woodland worth visiting.

Surrounded by grass meadows or pasture lands, on all sides, Mossley is more of an urban district than a town.

[*Photo by Mrs. E. Leighton.*

SCENE IN MOSSLEY PARK.

On the Micklehurst side, from the slopes of Bucton can be obtained the best view of the town as a whole. Looking across the valley, one sees the houses nestling together on the hill slopes, with Upper Mossley and the church in the middle-ground. In the background is seen the line of Quickedge, and the slopes of Luzley; in the furthest distance the ridge of Brownedge; overlording all, stands the "Pike," keeping watch like a giant sentinel on the sky-line.

On the hillsides of Bucton, and in the cloughs and dells, are to be found many oak trees, but of a dwarf and stunted character.

The stone-wall boundaries of the green fields make a strong line of demarcation; thus far and no farther reaches the border-line of cultivation on the hill slopes, after which the heather, ling and bracken claim the mastery over all—and man no longer struggles. Whether man or Nature issued the edict is a problem, because of the varying height of this border-line.

In the autumn we sometimes get scenes equal to the views of the far-famed Scotch and Welsh hills. I have seen the tops of Noon Sun and Bucton hidden in a veil of misty vapour, causing the foreground to lie in a shadow of blue-grey, whilst the further distant portion of the valley is lit up by the sun's rays just piercing through and illuminating the sombre green fields to a brighter colour of emerald hue—the whole forming a picture worth more than a casual look. Winter time brings a picture peculiar to the season; from the height of Jacob's Ladder, at night time the whole valley is filled with a blue-black darkness, but in the bottom and on the hill slopes can be seen the lamps marking out the roads, and the mills with their lights, twinkling and flickering, making the whole valley one great illuminated garden of fairyland.

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Of the prosperity of Mossley during the early cotton days there is plenty of evidence in the large number of fairly-sized houses, all standing in their own grounds;

this is a point which strikes the visitor, more so when the size of the town is taken into consideration.

Once the pride of the owner, these houses were well kept and had large gardens ; the workpeople knew their masters, and the masters were not too proud to know their workmen intimately. From the accounts handed down they were proud of each other. More than once it has been related to me, by the older generation, of the struggles in those early days, and the feeling of good-fellowship that was exhibited when troubles came along.

Commercialism may have done something in the way of earning dividends for the shareholders, but the introduction of so many companies has killed the private trader, and in the process the soul of sympathetic fellowship has disappeared also. Competition is not always beneficial.

The mills have not had " good trade " and " full-time work," except during the " war boom," and Mossley has not been a thriving town for many years. Distress is not too evident, but the border-line is often approached in many cases. Thanks to the various funds, many people have been enabled to tide over the troublous times.

Of those old families which helped to build up the former prosperity there are but few representatives left who still live in the town. " The fine old Lancashire gentleman " of sterling character, though maybe somewhat unpolished, has disappeared, and a younger generation of a different type is growing up, who will again, it is hoped, bring back that state of well-being which we all desire.

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Some years ago (1904) the tramway system was introduced into Mossley ; it has not been exactly a financial success. Such is the rate of progress that to-day it is out-of-date when compared with the more mobile petrol-driven " 'bus," with its one man, who acts as driver and conductor.

The centre of activity in the 'bus world is Brookbottom, Upper Mossley. From here one may journey

to Oldham, *via* Grotton, Springhead and Lees; to Ashton, *via* Mossley Cross, Ashton Road and Hurst; to Stalybridge, *via* Staley Road, Hey Heads and Millbrook; to Saddleworth, *via* Haddens, Grove School, Shaw Hall and Uppermill. At Uppermill connection may be obtained with other 'bus companies, which run up to Standedge, etc.

The motor 'bus companies have opened up the line of communication between village, hamlet and town to a surprising extent. During the day, from early morning until late at night, there is a varying stream of traffic through the "Brook" of motor lorries, motor cars, motor 'buses and motor cycles, in addition to the ordinary horse-drawn vehicles; the "man" on point duty has occasionally some very busy minutes.

"Mally Garden End" has become a very active thoroughfare.

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The picture penned by Mr. James Kenworthy in his diary of the housing and sanitary conditions no longer exists.

The water-carriage system is adopted in the new property being erected under the authority of the Town Council, and the houses are supplied with hot and cold water throughout. Under the scheme adopted by the Council, when complete, there will be a colony of 72 houses, which have been built by "direct labour." Mossley has every reason to be proud of its housing scheme, and those members of the committee deserve all credit for their efforts in producing dwellings which will stand favourable comparison with similar schemes of neighbouring towns.

During the next decade Mossley contemplates building a new gas works at a cost of £100,000 approximately; a new school on the Micklehurst side to keep up with the advance in the educational world; and a new station for the supply of electricity, under the Joint Board, is already an accomplished work.

The market on the Thursday night is a well-established function, and to the housewife has been found "a very

[*Photo Bassano.*

COUNCILLOR AUSTIN HOPKINSON, J.P.,
M.P. for Mossley Division.

present help in time of trouble " ; between the hours of five and eight the scene is one of activity and bustle. It is the centre of attraction for young and old, who ramble round and scan the various stalls for the wares of which they are in want.

In the amusement line the town is well catered for by the two picture palaces, one in Upper Mossley, run by the local co-operative society ; the other in Lower Mossley, being a private venture of a few local gentlemen. It has become a part of life to pay a weekly visit to the " pictures," and there is no doubt that some of the shows are of real value to the community.

Once Mossley was famous for its musicians in the vocal section and in the instrumental. It could boast of a Vocal Society and an Orchestral Society, and both societies could run a series of concerts in the winter time for the benefit of the inhabitants. But other times, other ways ; both organisations are defunct, and concerts no longer satisfy the taste of the public.

But that " musical taste " is still present and still working is evident in the voluntary choirs attached to the many places of worship in the town, and in the voices of the congregations. One may travel a long way and not find such hearty singing as is found in our churches and chapels. Long may it continue !

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This volume draws to a conclusion ; I must thank many members of the public for the many little helps I have received in words of encouragement and bits of information; specially Councillor A. J. Sidebottom, J.P., for the correction of the proof sheets.

It is my aim, during the next few years, to gather information for a second volume containing the later phase of its history and its personal characters. I need the help of the people. There must be in many homes some old letters and photographs of the periods of the sixties, seventies and eighties which would be interesting material when gathered together. I should be delighted to have the opportunity to read and make notes for the later publication.

Lorne Street,
Mossley.

ALFRED HOLT.

Chronology of Mossley.

410	Bucton, Hartshead and Castleshaw known to the Romans.
1086	The estate of Quick mentioned in Domesday Book.
1309	Henry, son of William de Mossley, claimed land which afterwards became known as Mossley. (Assheton records.)
1334	Manor of Quick taxed.
1400	Luzley mentioned in the rent-roll. (Assheton.)
1422	"Jak of the Leghes," Richard Unton, paid rent to the Lord of the Manor for Mossley.
	Nan of Windybank mentioned in rent-roll.
1430	John de Radcliffe owned Quick.
1617	Mossley shown as a division of Ashton. (Baines.)
1618	Robert Ashton, of Mossley, mentioned in a list. (Baines.)
1659	The oldest date-stone on a house in Mossley.
1686	Grotton Hall built.
1688	Mossley divided into twelve allotments.
1695	On a map of Lancashire, of this date, Mossley is not marked, but Micklehurst is shown. (Oldham Library.)
1751	Hartshead Pike mentioned by Aikin.
1755	First Parish Church of St. George's built.
1755–75	Rev. J. Craddock curate of St. George's.
1767	Discovery of ornaments at Bucton Castle.
1772	Tombstone in Mossley Churchyard; Thomas Brooke, cardmaker.
1778	Scout Mill in existence.
1785	For the Benefit of a Charity School now erecting at Mossley will be performed at Mossley Chapel, on Sunday evening, the 31st of this instant July, The Sacred Oratorio of Jephthah. By a select Band of the most eminent Performers in the neighbouring towns.
	The principal songs by Messrs. Nield, Hardman, Radcliffe, Wild, Mrs. Shepley and Miss Wrigley.
	Principal instrument performers are Messrs. Wainwright, Whitehead, Newton and Clough.
	The songs and choruses are intended to be carried on with that character and decorum which the subject requires, and as the Benefit is to be solely appropriated to Charity, it is humbly presumed the Intention will meet that encouragement which is due to such acts of Benevolence.

The Performance will begin precisely at Two o'clock. Admission to the Gallery, Two Shillings. Bottom of the Chapel, One Shilling.

Tickets to be had at the Chapel Door, or of Messrs. Buckley and Lees, Innkeepers in Mossley.

Books of the Oratorio at 3d. each to be had in the Chapel.

1788 Clough Mill established, Micklehurst.
First mill in the district to adopt water-power.

1759–1792 Turnpike Road over Stanedge constructed.

1773 Mossley a small hamlet.

1785 Chapel School (Market Ground) built at Mossley.

1780 Huddersfield Road made, Micklehurst.

1786 St. George's Church enlarged.

1790 Wood Hall occupied by the Kenworthy family.

1790 Rev. Sedgewick buried in the church.

1784–1802 Within a period of 18 years there have been three heavy falls of timber on the Earl of Stamford's estate in the parish of Ashton-under-Lyne.

The last great fall was in 1802, and in the spring of that year the greatest part of the timber was cleared away and sent to Liverpool for shipbuilding purposes. It was calculated that the sale would realise £70,000.

1786 June 3. "In the course of a few weeks several Sunday Schools have been established within the Chapelry of Mossley, in the Parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, wherein upwards of 400 children receive instruction in the principles of their Christian duty, and every encouragement is given to that laudable institution by the charitable assistance of well-disposed people in the neighbourhood." (C. E. H.)

1791 April 18. Notice is hereby given that there is intended to be Fairs held at Mosley, in the Parish of Ashton-under-line, and County of Lancaster, for the Benefit and Convenience of the said Neighbourhood, and Parts adjacent, for buying and selling Horned cattle, Horses, Swine and other wares and Merchandise, on the following days, namely April 28 and Nov. the 10 (which happening this year on Sunday will be held the next day before) and March the 22nd.

N.B.—As an encouragement to the said establishment there will be a Reward of Half-a-guinea given to the person who shall show the finest calving cow, and 7s. 6d. for the finest barren cow at the first Fair as above mentioned.

Mosley, Apr. 18, 1791. (C. E. H.)

1803 July 16. Wanted a Schoolmaster and Mistress for Mossley school, Saddleworth. The Master will be required to teach the English language grammatically, writing, merchant's accounts, etc.; and the Mistress to instruct the girls in reading, and plain and useful needlework. The village of Mossley is situate 10 miles from Manchester, 10 from Rochdale, 10 from Stockport and 3 from Ashton-under-line; is extremely populous; the schoolhouse very convenient, and there is also accommodation for a few boarders. Applications (post paid) addressed to the Trustees, will be duly attended to. (C. E. H.)

1816 Road from Ashton to Doctor Lane Head made.

1817 Thursday, June 19. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon there came a terrific storm accompanied by darkness and lightning; hailstones and irregular pieces of ice 4 to 6 inches in size fell. (Baines.)

1819 Extract from Commercial Directory:—The "Cornwallis" runs daily to Manchester and Liverpool at 9 in the morning, from the "George" in Huddersfield. "The Pilot" from Leeds calls at "The Packhorse."

1820 Hartshead Pike fell.
Stockport Road completed.
Nathaniel Buckley & Sons built Old Roughtown and Carr Hill Mills.

1821 Mossley has 300 houses. Population: 575 males; 637 females; total, 1,212 persons. (Cooke.)

1800–1830 Wakefield Road made between Stalybridge and Mossley.

1823 "Old Johnny's Mill" at Waterton built.
Charles Kershaw and Sons built Valley Mills.
Methodist New Connexion built Chapel; rebuilt 1835.

1824 From a Directory: John Roylance, Tinplate worker; John Hardy and James Wrigley, Machine makers.

1825 Road from French Top to Stalybridge made.
Haddens and Shaw Hall route.

1829 Brookbottom Mill worked by steam-power.
Mark Andrews' Mill.

1831 John and George Mayall's Mills built.
Population of Mossley, 1,300.

1832 Manchester Road made.
Bradley Pass, Nail makers.

1836–1840 Knott Hill Reservoirs constructed. Capacity 64 million gals.

1837 Gas first used at Kershaw's Lane End Mill.

1840	Mechanics' Institution formed.
	Two fairs for cattle: June 21 and last Monday in October.
	Brookbottom at this time an open place.
1841	Lord Stamford at a public auction buys the land from Staley to Micklehurst from Lord Tollemache.
	Brownedge tried for coal.
	The number of houses has increased to 500.
	The population is now 1,500.
	There are seven mills in Mossley. (Butterworth.)
	Sunday Schools are established at Mossley and Hartshead.
	On the Ashton list of magistrates the name of John Buckley, of Mossley, appears.
1843	Broadcarr Colliery Pit opened.
1847	St. George's Parish Schools erected.
1848	Mossley "Chartists" joined Ashton section.
	December. Mossley Chartists tried and sentenced at York Assizes.
1849	The last "Bull-bait" at Lydgate.
	The first railway made through Mossley.
1850	London Exhibition. Robert Heys, of Mossley, awarded the Gold Medal for weaving.
1851	August 13–14, great thunderstorm; child drowned and afterwards found at Black Rock.
1852	Gentleman's Glee Club formed.
1853	Mossley Temperance Band. First Prize at Belle Vue.
1855	Abney Church built.
1856	Meeting at Shears Inn and formation of Co-operative Union.
	August 9. River Tame flooded; several bridges destroyed between Greenfield and Scout Mill; water entered the mills in the valley; swept down three houses in New Hollins.
1857	Mossley Druids Band formed.
1860	Stamford Mill built.
	Formation of the old 34th Volunteers at Lydgate.
	Scout Mill burned down.
	Roughtown Drum and Fife Band formed.
	Fourth Annual Fair in Mossley Brow.
	Tea-party in Methodist School, held by St. Joseph's in aid of a new church.
1861	February 9. "Such a storm as is seldom seen in a man's lifetime; commencing in the morning, and continuing all day with wind and snow."
1862	Horticultural Society formed.
1862–5	"Cotton Famine."
1863	St. Joseph's Schools and Church built.
	Foundation Stone of the present Pike laid by Dr. Lees, Sep. 17.

1864	Local Government Board Act adopted, Feb. 25.
	Swineshaw Reservoirs commenced as relief work.
1865–8	St. John's School built.
1866	River Tame in heavy flood; Nov. 16, James Whitworth drowned at Scout; body found at Stockport in the river on Dec. 1.
1867	Mossley Operative Spinners meet at the George Hotel. Probably established in 1850; during the cotton famine all funds were paid out; Society re-formed in 1866.
	Wesleyan School built in Stamford Road.
	Population of Mossley 14,000; included with Stalybridge for the election of Member of Parliament.
1868–9	Very dry summer; the water supply ran out.
1873	Stamford Park opened, July 12.
1878	St. John's Church consecrated.
1876	Wyre Street School opened.
1881	Mossley Vocal Society formed.
	Population 13,382.
1890	Jubilee of the Mechanics' Institution.

[*Photo by Ben Lees, Esq.*

THE TOWN HALL, MOSSLEY.

1892 Mossley Town Hall opened May 7; formerly the residence of George Mayall, Esq., who built it in the early 60's.

1895 All Saints' Church consecrated.

1897 Mossley Brass Band. First Prize at Belle Vue contest.

1898 Roughtown British School closed. (Pickle's.)

1904 Tramway System introduced (July).

1907 Chew Reservoirs commenced.

1908 Wyre Street School closed as a Day School.

1911 Friday, Oct. 20. Tram accident. Car over railway bridge. 5 killed, 4 injured.

1912 Infant School at St. John's burned down.
Drill Hall opened by the Duke of Teck.

1913 Milton Council School opened.

1915 Abney School closed as a Day School.

1916 Livingstone Council School opened.

1917 June 16. (*Reporter.*) In the official list of military honours published on Saturday morning, is the name Private Ernest Sykes, Northumberland Fusiliers, V.C.

He enlisted at the beginning of the war, and was formerly a platelayer on the railway at Micklehurst.

At the great fight at Suvla Bay, Aug. 21, 1915, Private Sykes had his foot shattered by a bullet, and was invalided to Camberwell Hospital, London.

At Whitsuntide, 1916, he was sent out to France and was transferred from the 8th West Riding to the Northumberland Fusiliers.

He took part in the Somme battles, including Delville Wood, and also in two big battles at the Arras front.

For good work at Rocklingcourt on April 9 he was recommended for the V.C.

The feat for which he was awarded the V.C. is given as follows: "For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty when his battalion in attack was held up about 350 yards in advance of our lines by intense fire from front and flank, and suffered heavy casualties.

"Private Sykes, despite this heavy fire, rushed forward and brought back four wounded; he made a fifth journey, and remained out under conditions which appeared to be certain death until he had bandaged all those who were too badly wounded to be moved. These gallant actions, performed under incessant fire from machine gun and rifle, showed an utter contempt of danger."

This was the first V.C. won by the regiment since the Indian Mutiny, and also the first V.C. won by an employee of the L. N. & W. Railway.

Private Sykes afterwards was invested by the King at London.

July 14, 1917. Mossley all excited on the Thursday evening; word had been received that Private Sykes would arrive at 8-40 p.m.; his workmates put fog signals on the line; in front of the station there was a crowd of about 3,000 people waiting to welcome him. He was received by the Mayor (Ald. J. E. Rhodes) and the members of the Council and by the members of the town with an enthusiastic welcome.

Ex-Mayors of the Borough of Mossley.

Charter of Incorporation granted 13th of March, 1885.

George Andrew, Esq.	June, 1885, to Nov., 1886.
John Mayall, Esq.	Nov., 1886, to Nov., 1888.
Robert Shaw Buckley, Esq.	Nov., 1888, to Nov., 1890.
Joseph Fearns Lawton, Esq.	Nov., 1890, to Nov , 1892.
Henry T. Clementson, Esq.	Nov., 1892, to Nov., 1893.
Edward Iredale, Esq.	Nov., 1893, to Nov., 1895.
John Mitchell, Esq.	Nov., 1895, to Nov., 1897.
John Clark, Esq.	Nov., 1897, to Nov., 1899.
William J. Patten, Esq.	Nov., 1899, to Nov., 1901.
Osmond O. Noel, Esq.	Nov., 1901, to Nov., 1903.
Edward Iredale, Esq.	Nov., 1903, to Nov., 1906.
Joseph Mallalieu, Esq.	Nov., 1906, to Nov., 1907.
William J. Patten, Esq.	Nov., 1907, to Nov., 1909.
William E. Rawson, Esq.	Nov., 1909, to Nov., 1910.
Robert Radcliffe, Esq.	Nov., 1910, to Nov., 1911.
Hezekiah Sykes, Esq.	Nov., 1911, to Nov., 1912.
William Lees, Esq.	Nov., 1912, to Nov., 1913.
Matthew B. Farr, Esq.	Nov., 1913, to Nov., 1914.
John Bradbury, Esq.	Nov., 1914, to Nov., 1915.
Ben Sykes, Esq.	Nov., 1915, to Nov., 1916.
John E. Rhodes, Esq.	Nov., 1916, to Nov., 1917.
John Shaw, Esq.	Nov., 1917, to Nov., 1918.
James A. Bottomley, Esq.	Nov., 1918, to Nov., 1919.
John Platt, Esq.	Nov., 1919, to Nov., 1920.
Joseph Dennis, Esq.	Nov., 1920, to Nov., 1921.
Alfred Goddard, Esq.	Nov., 1921, to Nov., 1922.
John Ogden, Esq.	Nov., 1922, to Nov., 1923.
James A. Bottomley, Esq.	Nov., 1923, to Nov., 1926.
,, ,,	Nov., 1926, to Nov., 1927.

Freemen of the Borough.

Freedom of the Borough conferred upon—

Alderman Hezekiah Sykes, May 22, 1917.
Alderman Matthew B. Farr, July 13, 1920.
Alderman James A. Bottomley, Oct. 12, 1926.

[*Photo Lafayette.*

THE MAYORESS,
Mrs. J. A. Bottomley

[*Photo Lafayette.*

HIS WORSHIP THE MAYOR,
Alderman J. A. Bottomley, J.P.

V. C. PROCTER, Esq.,
Town Clerk.

Local Board.

The last Local Board in 1884 was composed of the following :—

Miles Mayall, Clifton Villa.
John Buckley, Albert House.
John Burgess, Roaches.
Amos Ogden, Baguley Hill.
Edward Iredale, Lorne Street.
James Nield, Crown Inn.
James Buckley, Manor Lodge.
Sam Broadbent, Friendship Inn.
John Heys, Stamford Street.
Joseph F. Lawton, Micklehurst.
John Mayall, Rock Bank.
R. S. Buckley, J.P., Westholme.
George Andrew, J.P., Apsley House.
R. B. Brooks, Arundel Street.
James Buckley, Medical Hall.
Joseph Lees, Micklehurst.
James Kershaw, Lane End.

Mossley Town Council.

As First Constituted, 8th June, 1885

MAYOR:
Councillor George Andrew, J.P.

ALDERMEN:

Robert Booth Brooks.	John Heys.
Robert Shaw Buckley.	Joseph Fearns Lawton.
John Burgess.	Miles Mayall.

COUNCILLORS:

Andrew Beswick.	John William Mallalieu.
James Buckley.	George Marland.
John Buckley.	Edmund Marsden.
John Charles Buckley.	John Mayall.
Henry Thos. Clementson.	William Mayall.
Thomas Frost.	William Edward Mills.
Joshua Hopkins.	James Nield.
James Kershaw.	Amos Ogden.

William Ed. Radcliffe.

BOROUGH MAGISTRATES, 1926:
James A. Bottomley, Esq. (Mayor).

John Ogden, Esq.	John H. Brooks, Esq.
Wm. E. Rawson, Esq.	William Cameron, Esq.
Hezekiah Sykes, Esq.	John Ed. Rhodes, Esq.
Matthew B. Farr, Esq.	A. J. Sidebottom, Esq.
James Finch, Esq.	Robert H. Buckley, Esq.
Wright Mosley, Esq.	James W. Clark, Esq.
John Bradbury, Esq.	Robert Eatough, Esq.
M. B. Chadwick, Esq.	John Platt, Esq.
G. E. H. Lawton, Esq.	Mrs. Yates.
Peter Shaw, Esq.	Mrs. Hitchman.

Clerk to the Justices: V. C. Procter, Esq.

Back Row. Reading from Left to Right:—T. TARNEY (Mayor's Attendant), J. E. RHODES, J.P. (Borough Treasurer), M. DAWSON (Rates Collector), R. MELLOR (Chief of Fire Brigade), W. BENNETT (Gas Manager), Councillor J. W. CLARK, J.P., Councillor O. MALLALIEU, Councillor W. H. HODSON, Councillor P. TAYLOR, Councillor J. LOMAS, Councillor A. E. BELL.

Middle Row. Reading from Left to Right:—W. A. MAYALL (Secretary of Education), Councillor J. MILLS, Councillor J. YARWOOD, Councillor F. H. BELL, Councillor J. FINCH, J.P., Councillor A. J. SIDEBOTTOM, J.P., V. C. PROCTER (Town Clerk, Clerk to the Magistrates), Councillor E. MARLAND, Councillor A. BUCKLEY, Councillor J. COCKSHOOT, Councillor H. MITCHELL, Councillor J. OGDEN, J.P.

Front Row. Reading from Left to Right:—Alderman J. DENNIS, Alderman M. B. FARR, J.P., C.C., Alderman H. SYKES, J.P., Mrs. J. A. BOTTOMLEY (Mayoress), Alderman J. A. BOTTOMLEY, J.P. (Mayor), Councillor R. PUGH (Deputy Mayor), Alderman J. PLATT, J.P., Councillor J. BUCKLEY.

Mossley Town Council.

2nd November, 1926.

MAYOR:
Ald. J. A. Bottomley, J.P.

ALDERMEN:

J. A. Bottomley, Esq., J.P.	J. H. Oldfield, Esq.
J. Dennis, Esq.	J. Platt, Esq., J.P.
M. B. Farr, Esq., J.P.	Hez. Sykes, Esq., J.P.

COUNCILLORS:

Lancashire Ward—

F. H. Bell, Esq.	J. Mills, Esq.
A Buckley, Esq.	P. Taylor, Esq.
J. Finch, Esq., J.P.	J. Yarwood, Esq.

Yorkshire Ward—

A. E. Bell, Esq.	E. Marland, Esq.
J. Cockshoot, Esq.	H. Mitchell, Esq.
W. H. Hodson, Esq.	J. Ogden, Esq., J.P.

Cheshire Ward—

Jas. Buckley, Esq.	O. Mallalieu, Esq.
J. Clarke, Esq., J.P.	R. Pugh, Esq.
J. Lomas, Esq.	A. J. Sidebottom, Esq., J.P.

REPRESENTATIVES ON THE ASHTON-UNDER-LYNE BOARD OF GUARDIANS:

Yorkshire Ward	Rev. W. Donnelly.
Lancashire Ward	F. Rawcliffe, Esq.
Cheshire Ward	Ald. H. Sykes, J.P.

Statistics.

POPULATION—CENSUS.

1881	13,382
1891	14,162
1901	13,462
1911	13,205
1921	12,705

SCHOLARS IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

1910	1,803
1919	2,006
1920	1,921
1925	1,826

Area of Borough	3,624 acres.
Gross Estimated Rental	£106,307
Rateable Value	£75,472
Assessable Value	£74,598

MAIN ROADS WITHIN THE BOROUGH.

	M.	F.	Yds.
Huddersfield Road—Ash Hill to Shadows Lane...	1	3	138
Manchester Road—Blackrock to Shadows Lane ..	2	1	114
Stockport Road—Junction Inn to Grove School ..	1	6	41
	5	3	73

SECONDARY ROADS.

Stamford Road and Lees Road	1	0	204
Staley Road and Egmont Street	0	6	80
Micklehurst Road and Wagon Road	0	5	150
	2	4	214

DEPTH AND CAPACITY OF DISTRICT JOINT WATERWORKS RESERVOIRS.

	Depth of Reservoirs. Ft.	Capacities of Reservoirs. Gallons.
*a*Walker Wood	61	202,084,000
Brushes.....	44	52,165,000
Lower Swineshaw	33	55,500,000
Higher Swineshaw	53	168,908,000
Yeoman Hey	65	205,596,000
Chew	72	206,000,000
Greenfield	62	101,686,000
*b*Knott Hill	44	64,000,000
*b*Dukinfield	24	33,000,000
		1,088,939,000

a Compensation Reservoir.
b Service Reservoirs.

Extra Copies .. 2/- Paper Backs.
" " .. 3/- Cloth "
Postage, 3d. extra.

A. HOLT, Lorne Street, Mossley, Manchester.

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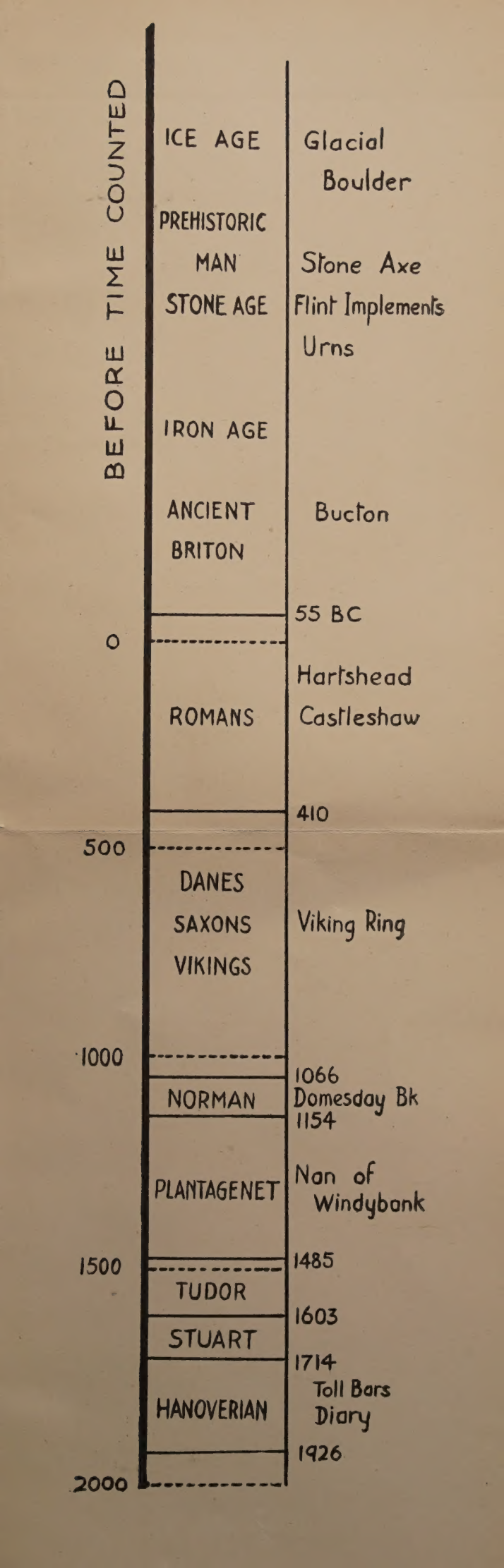
BEFORE TIME COUNTED
ICE AGE
Glacial Boulder
PREHISTORIC MAN
STONE AGE
Stone Axe
Flint Implements
Urns
IRON AGE
ANCIENT BRITON
Bucton
55 BC
0
ROMANS
Hartshead
Castleshaw
410
500
DANES
SAXONS
VIKINGS
Viking Ring
1000
1066
NORMAN
Domesday Bk
1154
PLANTAGENET
Nan of Windybank
1500
1485
TUDOR
1603
STUART
1714
HANOVERIAN
Toll Bars
Diary
1926
2000

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